1029
137

MEMOIRS

OF

MADAME MANSON,

EXPLANATORY OF HER CONDUCT,

ON THE

TRIAL FOR THE ASSASSINATION

OF

M. FUALDÈS.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF,

AND ADDRESSED TO

MADAME ENJALRAN, HER MOTHER.

WITH A PORTRAIT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

AND ACCOMPANIED BY AN ABSTRACT OF THE TRIAL; AND A CONCISE ACCOUNT OF THE PERSONS AND EVENTS ALLUDED TO IN THE MEMOIRS,

BY

THE TRANSLATOR.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY, Paternoster-Row.

1818.

Printed by T. C. HANSARD, Peterborough-Court, Fleet street, London.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL LIBRARY 137

PREFACE.

The Translator of the following Memoirs is convinced that he offers to the English Public a most striking and amusing production, combining all the interest attached to an account of real facts and transactions of an extraordinary nature, with the vivid colouring, sudden transitions, and picturesque descriptions which distinguish works of fiction. The uncommon personage who unveils her mind and her character in her own wild and original manner, must be a study for the philosopher as well as an object of intense curiosity to the common observer. The strength of her feelings, the fascination of her lan-

guage, the energy and vigor of her conceptions, form a powerful contrast with the weakness of her conduct and the aberrations of her reason. The mystery which still hangs over her motives, amid pretensions of the most undisguised disclosures, and the contradictions in her testimony without any apparent design to deceive, add much to the interest of that extraordinary trial, in which she first made her appearance as a witness, and is now cited as an accomplice.

As it was impossible to separate her from that process in which she displayed such strange behaviour, as to make herself the heroine of the piece, and to confer a higher interest on a judicial scene already sufficiently notorious by the other principal persons, the crime for which they stood accused, the situation of the victim who had

perished by it, the number of witnesses, and by various other circumstances, the translator has thought it his duty to prefix to the present Memoirs a notice of the murder, and to produce in the Appendix the chief depositions on the trial at Rodez.

It would be superfluous, and perhaps impossible, in him to attempt to give, or to succeed in giving any additional excitement to public attention, which is already so much alive on the subject, and which makes it necessary for every French, and almost every English journal, to have a daily article from Albi, as if something that affected the fate of Europe were there transacting.

The abstract of the Trial, and the translation of the Memoirs, which derive additional interest from the strange situation in which Madame Manson

now stands, will, in their turn, have the effect of rendering the proceedings which are to take place against her as an accomplice, in March next, more intelligible, and, perhaps, more interesting.

London, February, 1818.

INTRODUCTION.

ONE of the most remarkable trials, that ever took place in a Court of Justice, was perhaps that for the murder of M. Fualdès at Rodez. The peculiar atrocity which marked the commission of the crime; the rank of the perpetrators; the number of accomplices; the extraordinary mystery which even now after judgment has been once given, and the criminals have been clearly convicted, still hangs over the whole transaction, and seems to prepare us for even more frightful disclosures,—are circumstances which tend to awaken interest and excite curiosity in no common degree.

For a space of forty years M. Fualdès had sustained the character, and executed the functions of a magistrate with distinguished ability and credit. He filled successively the offices of Public Accuser and *Procureur Imperial* of the Criminal Court. On the resignation of this latter appointment in 1816, he retired upon a pension, and led a private life, enjoying the cordial esteem of his friends, and the respect of the public.

It is difficult to decide upon the motive which prompted the assassins to the commission of the frightful act by which his life was taken away. By some it has been ascribed to the rancour arising out of political differences; by others, to the possession by the deceased of certain papers, which tended to convict one of the assassins of the murder of his own illegitimate child. But the conjecture which has obtained most generally, and

which seems best supported by evidence, is, that the murderers were instigated neither by political animosity, private revenge, nor personal fears, but that avarice was the leading principle of their conduct. M. Fualdès was known to be a man of wealth, and to have in his possession bonds for large sums.

Whatever may have been the existing cause, our horror at the crime is increased by the recollection of the fact, that the principals charged with it were relatives or friends of the victim, and that the avarice which appears to have actuated them, has not the excuse of want and distress. So far were they from having any temptation from poverty, to outrage every feeling of their nature, and break all the bonds of society, that at the time of the assassination one of them enjoyed opulence, and the other lived in comfortable circumstances.

The following is a concise narrative of the murder, and a few notices of the persons implicated in it, extracted from the indictment preferred against the prisoners, and the depositions taken on their trial:

On the 18th of March, 1817, M. Fualdès had received a considerable sum of money, as part of the proceeds of an estate which he had sold.

On the afternoon of the 19th, Bastide (one of the accused) had appointed a meeting with him at eight o'clock in the evening, for the negociation of notes or bills, or the transaction of some pecuniary affairs. Another account says, that this person owed ten thousand francs to the unfortunate magistrate, and that being pressed to pay the debt, about five o'clock on the 19th, he answered, "Do you think I mean to defraud you? I shall take means of paying your bill this evening." Be that

as it may, a few minutes before eight o'clock on that evening M. Fualdès left his house, and turning round the corner of the street *Hebdomadiers*, he was attacked by persons who forced a handkerchief into his mouth, and dragged him to the house of one Bancal. Here he was stretched upon a table, and had his throat cut with a butcher's knife. He struggled hard, and overturned the table; while they were replacing him upon it, he requested a moment to commend his soul to God, but somebody said, "No, he must instantly die!"

During the act of *bleeding* him, as they called it, Bancal held the lamp, and his wife received the blood into a trough. The blood was then given to a pig to drink, and the quantity which it was unable to manage, was thrown away. Adding insult to cruelty, one of the accomplices, while the crime was con-

summating, said, "M. Fualdès will no longer act the Buonapartist."

The money which was found upon him (17 francs) were given to the woman Bancal by the murderers, saying, "Here, take this, we do not kill this man for money." The rapacious virago tore a ring from the dead body, and wished to get possession of a shirt, because its cloth resembled an *aube* (part of a priest's vestments at the altar), but it was refused to her from fear of its leading to discovery.

A key which the sufferer had in his pocket was delivered to a gentleman from the country (Bastide) with these words: "Go and take possession of every thing."

The dead body, packed up like a bale of leather, was carried about ten o'clock the same night to the bank of the river Aveyron, by four individuals (Bax, Ban-

cal, Colard, and Bousquier); a man (Bastide) preceded them, armed with a fusil, and two others, one of whom (Jausion) likewise carried a fusil, followed. Arrived at the river, the corpse was disengaged from the packing, and thrown into it. It was seen floating next morning upon the water, taken out, and identified.

The young children of Bancal, who were believed to be asleep, had heard and seen all that passed through the curtains of their bed. They recounted every thing they witnessed.

Bancal's house, which generally remained open all night, had been shut on the 19th early in the evening. The assassins had posted in its neighbourhood people who played on noisy instruments from eight till nine o'clock, without interruption, to prevent the cries of the victim from being heard during his immolation.

In the house were found a blanket and other things covered with blood. The cane of M. Fualdès, and the pocket handkerchief, with which they had stifled his voice, were found in the street near the house.

The next morning, at seven o'clock, Bastide, and afterwards Jausion, went into the deceased's house, and robbed it of papers, money, and other effects. Jausion came in company with his wife and sister-in-law, both of whom aided him in the robbery.

From this short statement it will appear that the act of accusation embraced a considerable number of individuals as principals and accomplices in this horrid transaction. The following is a list of those who were brought to trial:

Jausion, aged fifty, a rich banker and broker of Rodez. He married the sister of Bastide, and in consequence of

this connexion, was related to M. Fualdès, of whom, for the last twenty years, he was the intimate friend.

Bastide, brother in law of the former, and of about the same age. He is the owner of an estate in the neighbourhood of Rodez. He was a near relative and godson of the deceased; and received from the wife of that unfortunate magistrate the same acts of kindness as though he had been her own son.

Bancal, the keeper of a house of bad fame, frequented by people of the lowest description. His wife; *Bax; Colard; Missonier; Ann Benoit;* all wretches the very dregs of the people. *Bousquier,* who had always conducted himself as an honest man; and the girl *Bancal,* against whom nothing was proved.

Madame *Jausion* and Madame *Galtier,* both sisters of Bastide, the latter a widow. They are remarkable for their

beauty, and have at all times enjoyed general esteem and consideration at Rodez.

When these two ladies were brought into court, where the other accused were already assembled, they threw themselves into the arms the one of her husband, the other of her brother, and remained in that position for a considerable time.

All these individuals were accused as principals or accomplices of the murder. During the trial, which began on the 18th of August, 1817, two hundred and forty-three witnesses were to be heard, and amongst them Madame Manson, who appeared after fifty-nine had been examined before her.

Clarissa Enjalran (afterwards Madame Manson), was born at Rodez in 1785. She was almost entirely brought up in the country, in an ancient château, named Le Perrié, which her father purchased of M. de Bonald, at the commencement of the Revolution. Her infancy was little indebted to education, and passed away in political storms. The retreat in which she passed the early part of her life was favourable to romantic ideas. Clarissa was endowed by nature with a very superior mind, great delicacy of wit, and exquisite sensibility. She loved her parents, and particularly her mother, with a kind of enthusiastic passion. In the dangers which her father incurred, during the troubles of the Revolution, she displayed, by the side of her mother, the fortitude of a heroine.

It has been said that she formed an attachment in early life, of which the object was beneath her family and ex-

pectations. We shall not insist on reports, which, to say the least, are uncertain. She married M. Manson, in compliance with her father's wishes; but this union was not productive of happiness. At the end of three months they were separated. The officer who had given her his hand, departed for Spain, and left her in the possession of a liberty which he had not till then permitted her to enjoy. She found herself exposed to the dangers of the world, and its remarks; it seems that in the circles of a little town, people are unwilling to believe a scrupulous observance of moral duty, and seek with malicious industry to envenom the most indifferent actions. Madame Manson, it must be confessed, gave more colour than any one to misinterpretation: she was singular, for she was of a superior mind; and the independence of her character provoked innumerable enemies.

On the return of the expedition from Spain, her husband came back to share her fire-side; but they were soon separated. M. Manson caused a legal order to be served on his wife, requiring her to come and live with him; but as she was near her indulgent friend, she refused to obey him, and subscribed an instrument to that effect, indignant that he should call upon the law to interpose in conjugal disputes.

She received new and more tender entreaties; and some time after, the husband, whom she had refused to accompany, was in the château concealed, and privately supported by the affectionate offices of a wife, who appeared to derive a higher pleasure from a connexion thus secretly maintained. The wedded lover was discovered; the reunion was thought easy, but the mother, to engage the daughter to separate from her, could employ only entreaties and persuasions. The husband was once

more sacrificed; but though she refused to live with him, yet under pretence of going sometimes to the village to church, she had an interview with him in the woods. Who shall interpret the caprices of a heart so wayward, as to expect from the performance of duty, the pleasing illusions of love? No one but Madame Manson.

Whoever sketches a biographical memoir of this lady, must appear to have drawn a portrait from some heroine in romance. Madame de Stael would say of her that she had not a prosaic taste. Would not one believe that this passage of Corinna was expressly made for her? "The common people stigmatise as foolish the perturbations of a soul, which, in this world, does not breathe sufficient air, enthusiasm, hope."

The young wife, however, became a mother, and her habits of life from this moment underwent an entire change.

Her destiny, however, was unchanged; her husband obtained an appointment at some distance from Rodez: the unfortunate woman remained in solitude; reduced to an inadequate pension, paid, if we may believe the proceedings of the suit already annulled, very irregularly.

There are no better means of becoming acquainted with Madame Manson than by citing her sentiments on her own character, as expressed in one of her letters:

* * * * *

"I have said that no one comprehends me, and it is true I scarcely know myself, though I daily study myself. I am astonished at myself: I am inexplicable; so says my mother. I do nothing like other people. It has been my misfortune to be unjustly accused; and actuated by a pride ill understood, or, if you like it better, eccentricity, I

disdain to justify myself. I am capable of making the greatest efforts in order to oblige: nothing is so flattering to me as inspiring sentiments of gratitude. I rarely calculate on the effects that will result from an action that my heart prompts me to perform, and I seldom have cause to regret it. I always act without premeditation; in short, I am believed to be what is called a bad temper; at least, they tell me so. I wrote lately to a person to say, that what was defective in my head, might easily be found in my heart. My behaviour in the trial about M. Fualdès appeared very extraordinary; I have, notwithstanding, been guided by the same motives, the discovery of truth; the justification of my father; the preservation of my son. This is all, I believe. I have deceived myself. I have not attained the object I proposed; it is not the only time, and it will happen

to me again. Can an inconsiderate woman correct herself? Never."

* * * * *

"They have just told me that I am decidedly included in the list of the accused, but this does not prevent my laughing. My judges will be more embarrassed than myself."

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

MEMOIRS, &c.

MADAME MANSON, *from the Prison of the Capuchins, Rodez, Dec.* 1817.

FROM the most affectionate of mothers, and firmest of friends, I will not conceal the truth. She only, perhaps, can believe, and will be able to appreciate it. She alone can preserve herself untainted by the dreadful suspicions entertained of me.

Listen to me, my dear mother, pity me, and put the most favourable construction on my conduct. I have no motive in deceiving you: it is my interest every way to speak truth. On

these terms only can I hope to administer relief to a troubled mind, and secure your approbation. Would that I had done it sooner; I should not have been betrayed into so much of inconsistency and error!

I present you with a narrative of the whole transaction: not in two words, for I will take a comprehensive view of the subject. I am fully at leisure; and if I should enter a little too minutely into detail, satisfied of awakening an interest in you, since to you only I address myself, my object will be attained.

You know that I came to reside at Rodez about the middle of October, 1816. I lived in the family of M. Pal, the members of which were distinguished by a gentleness of disposition, and strict integrity of manners. I seldom appeared in public, except when I went to church, or called upon Madame Constans, whom I employed

as my milliner. On one occasion, while I stood in her shop, a person came in, whose face I never recollect to have seen before. He talked so familiarly to her, and took so many indecent liberties, that I felt myself obliged to retreat hastily, without purchasing any thing.

The next time I saw this lady, she said that the stranger, who had given me such umbrage, was Aide-de-Camp of General Wautre, and a zealous royalist. "This," I replied, "cannot be urged in defence of rude behaviour, nor will it prove him to be a gentleman."

There is not the smallest doubt that the remark has been communicated to him: Madame Constans is capable of such an act of indiscretion.

This was about the end of January. I set out on my journey to see you, and remained with you till the fair of *Mi-*

*carême.** The curate of Crespins had encouraged me to hope that he might effect a reconciliation between my husband and myself. I returned home, fostering wishes which, alas! have been cruelly disappointed. On the day of this remarkable fair, Edward † proposed that I should spend the evening with Madame Seconds, where I might have an opportunity of seeing Mesdames de Firmi. I acquiesced, and it was agreed that my brother should fetch me at eight o'clock. It was usual in the house where I lodged to close the doors at ten: no one was exempted from this rule: it occasioned me, however, but little inconvenience, as I never went out in the evening. Before I repaired

* The middle of the carnival, which fell in that year on the 17th March, two days previously to the murder of M. Fualdès.

† One of her brothers; the name of the other is Gustavus.

to Madame Seconds, I desired that no one might sit up for me a moment beyond the time, as I intended, if it should be late, to procure a bed elsewhere. Edward and Gustavus escorted me. The evening passed very agreeably, amongst a party of young ladies and gentlemen. We sung and played. The clock was striking ten when Edward whispered to me, "Don't be uneasy, you may sleep at the *Hôtel des Princes*."

If I had been driven to extremities, I could have sat up all night in conversation with him. I have passed many nights much more painfully, and am destined to pass many more.

A little afterwards Madame de Firmi, who seemed to be under similar regulations as to time, wished me a good night, and retired. We followed. The family was yet up; and on my knocking at the door, opened it. My brothers as-

sured me we should meet again, and came the next day about two o'clock.

Edward, on entering my apartments, informed me, that he had just seen Maraye in Fontana's shop; and that he intended shortly to go to Madame Balsa, and invite her to take a walk to the Foral. My brother, who sought only for a decent pretence to accompany these ladies, engaged me to dress, and wait for him at Madame Seconds. I did not much relish the proposal, as the air was cool. I promised him, however, that I would soon be there. I went to Madame Seconds, and found her alone with her son-in-law, Mr. Balsa, who told us that he was going to dress, in order to conduct his wife, Josephine, to Madame de Bonald and Madame de Nattes. I said to myself, "There's an end of the walk." To me it was of little consequence. I preferred a good fire in my parlour, to the

North wind, which blew that day with great violence, and of which I should have been made fully sensible at the Foral. I sat down in an arm chair, resolved to await patiently the issue of the affair, conversing in the mean time with Madame Seconds, who assured me that Josephine's visits would be short, and that she might soon be expected. The clock struck five. "Oh! now," said I, "it is too late for a walk: the sun is withdrawing himself, I shall withdraw too."

I took leave, and returning home, passed the evening privately in my room. I never saw my brothers, nor can I conjecture how they employed themselves. The next day,* 19th, I was told they had been in our street in the course of the morning, and that at

* The day on which the murder was committed.

last they went away about four to *Le Perrié.**

In the evening I entered the kitchen, while the family were at supper; I took a chair near the fire, and began some net-work. At half past seven I heard a rap at the door. It was M. Muret, a merchant of Saint Géniez. When he saw they were yet at supper, he intimated a wish that they should not disturb themselves, and withdrew, promising to come back the next day. I passed the remaining part of the evening with the family, till ten, when I retired to rest, after a sermon had been read, and the family had concluded their devotions. The existence of this fact is as incontrovertible as that of your affection for me. I leave you, therefore, my dear mother, to determine the degree of credit with which it is to be received.

* Her father's seat in the country.

On the morning of the next day, 20th, I went into the kitchen to fetch a coffee-pot; this circumstance may not, perhaps, be unimportant. I saw Madame Thérondel, who said, "Have you heard the news? a man has been found drowned in the Aveyron." I observed, that for some time nothing had been talked of but accidents and misfortunes, and that our department in particular was become notorious in this respect. It was now about seven o'clock. I returned to my room. An hour afterwards, one of the children came to tell me that the deceased was Mr. Fualdès. "I am sorry to hear it," cried I; "he bears an extremely good character." I had seen him once at his country seat of Serres, where he loaded my mother and myself with civilities. Upon this I hastened down stairs, in order to collect other particulars. Mr. Muret was in the

kitchen, in close conversation with my landlord about the murder, of which, however, they had no clear information. A report of suicide began to circulate rapidly; and people already indulged a thousand idle conjectures.

I returned to my room, and was making preparation for dinner, when the children called me to come and see the body, which had just been dragged out of the water.

"I shall not go," I replied, "the figure would haunt me in the night, and terrify me."—"Oh!" said they, "every body goes."—"Well," I replied at length, "let us go."

We walked towards the mill *des Besses*; and, as we were not perfectly acquainted with the road, wandered about for a considerable space of time before we could find the river. When we arrived, we found the corpse of the unhappy Fualdès already placed

on a litter. His face was covered by the skirt of his coat, which had been thrown over it. At this period I confess I did not feel that interest in his fate which has since inspired me. I knew not the real cause of his death; and as it was supposed to have been occasioned by his own act, I followed the corpse, very little affected by the scene.

If I had witnessed, the night before, the perpetration of this foul murder, should I have had courage to follow the sad remains the day after? I who, after an interval of more than five months, swooned at the sight of the table on which it was reported he was murdered?

I return from this digression. As I went along, I inquired of some of the gens d'armes, whether any money were found on the person of the deceased? They answered in the negative; adding,

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SAR

that a man dressed in a green coat, had called upon M. Fualdès about eight o'clock in the evening, to conduct him the *Société*, and that he had not been heard of afterwards.

On my entering the town, I met M. d'Hauterive walking very fast, and stopped him. He recognised me, and told me that his wife lodged at the *Tapis vert*; and that he was on the point of leaving town. I expressed a wish to see her, and we went along the Ambergue. In the course of conversation, I asked if he knew what had befallen Fualdès? He answered, "Well, can I help it?" I found Madame d'Hauterive, as I entered the inn, busily employed in packing up her portmanteau. She said she should have been obliged to go, with the regret of not having seen me, as her husband had been unable to trace me to my lodgings.

A moment afterwards, she added, that she had passed the evening at my father's, where she remained till ten o'clock. He might have informed her where I lived.

Scarcely any allusion was made to the murder. M. and Madame d'Hauterive departed at an early hour. The weather was very tempestuous. I remarked this, with a view of inducing them to defer the journey; but they assured me they had no time to lose.

When I reached home, I was told that suspicion had fallen on a person named Lacueille, of Mur-de-Barrez; because his father had been arrested by the deceased, for a considerable sum, which he was not in a condition to pay.

Sometime after, hints were thrown out in reference to M. Bastide. But there are so many of this name! I was alarmed, on the supposition that it might be a relation of Madame Pons.

I now took up the pen to give you some particulars; but the accounts varied every moment; I was induced therefore to abandon my intention, and resume it only when I had collected more authentic materials.

Provoked that I could rely on nothing but vague surmise, I repaired to Madame Dornes,* in the expectation of learning something more decisive; but she declared that she knew as little about it as myself. One of the Demoiselles André, who joined us, mentioned that the police had been searching a suspicious house in *Rue des Hebdomadiers*, that vestiges of blood had been found there, and that the keys were secured.

On the 21st, I was informed that Bastide Gramont had been interrogated the day before, but not arrested. On Sunday, the 22nd, as I returned from mass,

* Her cousin, sister of M. Amans Rodat.

Madame Pal addressing me, said, "Will you see poor Bastide de Gros, who is accused of the murder? he is buying a hat at Acquier's." I stationed myself at the street door, the shop of the hatter being opposite; and could distinctly perceive the person whom she designated, *Gramont Bastide*. I examined him attentively, and on re-entering, observed to my landlady that she was under a mistake; that I knew him well; and that she saw only his brother Louis, resident at *La Montagne*, near Vezins. On this a long dispute arose between us, conducted with such surprising obstinacy, that if we had been cited each before a court of Justice, to depose to the truth of the fact, one would have sworn that Gramont had purchased the hat; the other, that his brother, not himself, had done so. In this manner people delude themselves.

On Monday, 23rd, I called on Madame

Constans. Rose Pierret came in shortly after. I had but little acquaintance with her. I had seen her, however, before your indisposition. She appeared deeply affected at the melancholy event which had taken place, and spoke of it in terms of great horror. "It is dreadful," she repeated, "they have stabbed the wretched victim on a table, with a blunt knife; the foot of the table broke. He begged to be permitted for an instant to recommend his soul to God, 'No,' replied Bastide, with brutal ferocity, 'you must die.' They will be taken inevitably," said Rose, "if they escape, heaven is no longer just!"

These were the expressions she used. It did not occur to me that she was at Bancal's house during the performance of this cruel tragedy; and it was only after a considerable lapse of time that I entertained a suspicion of it.

I went to Olemps on Tuesday even-

ing; Amans had set out from that place early for the fair of Espalion. Madame Rodat was alone with her brother William; as soon as she perceived me, she said, "Fine things, truly, are going on at Rodez."—"Yes," I replied, "we distinguish ourselves." Sophia asked me the particulars. I communicated what I had collected from Rose; which, in the opinion of Amans, indicate the accuracy of *an eye witness*. Observe this my dear mother.

Rose made use of an expression that would offend an ear of delicacy. "The assassins wished to persuade the public that M. Fualdès *suicided (s'était* suicidé *lui-même)* himself; but Providence has defeated their object." William tells me, he has heard much spoken in commendation of the beauty, and talents of Rose: "but one may be very amiable," he remarked, "and speak, notwithstanding, very bad french."

Amans Rodat returned from Espalion. He met Jausion and Bastide, who were going to Rodez. Bastide attempted to play off some witticisms, but Rodat treated him with great reserve; and said to a friend who accompanied him, "That man goes forward to Rodez, to make sure of being arrested." For once his predictions were verified: Bastide was thrown into prison.

Some weeks afterwards, the younger children of M. Pal invited me to accompany them to the *Hospice*, in order to pay a visit to their sister, at this time a nun in Nevers. One of the *dames de Charité* informed me, that Bancal's children had made important discoveries tending to elucidate this mysterious affair. As I betrayed some little curiosity, they were ordered to appear before us, and I put several questions, to which they returned no answer. Alexis, a little boy, three years of age, repeated

what all the world knew before. Madelaine observed, that her brother was but a child, who ought not to be listened to: for her part, she could declare she had neither seen nor heard any thing; and was sure the murder had not been committed at her father's house.

On the 7th of April, Jausion was arrested: his wife and sister-in-law were taken into custody the day after. Towards the middle of the month you sent for me to come to *Le Perrié*, where I mentioned, as the news of the day, that Bancal had poisoned himself. The report of his death was circulated in the town, and soon afterwards confirmed.

On the 18th of May, I came back to Rodez. I had again an opportunity of seeing Rose, on one occasion at the shop of Madame Constans, the milliner; on another, in that of Mad[selle] Guyon, where I sometimes called to talk over the common occurrences of the day. She

always introduced the subject of the assassination; appeared to be sorry that the parties accused were to be tried any where but in the town; and repeated that there were two persons who had not yet been seized. Even this did not induce me to suppose that she knew more than she thought fit to relate.

The month of June passed without affording any additional light. You arrived on the 29th at Olemps, and cannot forget our long conversation on those points. Somebody, adverting to the deposition of Bousquier, one of the persons implicated in the guilt, and who is said to have sworn that he saw Jausion in the kitchen of Bancal's house, added, "I know it to be a fact, from good authority; I have it from one of the judges." To my cousin I remarked that I had no reason to doubt that a deposition had been made to this effect, but that I could not vouch for the truth

of its contents. He either did not comprehend me, or I failed to express myself in intelligible language. This is sometimes the case, and unpleasant consequences result from it.

I will not, my dear mother, revive the recollection of the moment when we separated. It was a melancholy one; I saw the tears stealing down your cheeks, and could not help imagining that you had dreadful presentiments of the future.

During the summer, I had seen, at church, M. Clémendot. He surveyed me with an air of impertinent curiosity, and I felt myself obliged to change my situation whenever he approached me. One day, as I stood at the window, he stopped to salute me: I pretended not to have seen him. A company of comedians at this time performed at Rodez, when an evil genius, bent on my destruction, inspired me with so

strong a passion for the spectacle, that I could not any longer resist the inclination of being present.

I deeply deplore this first fault, source of so many of my misfortunes, but it is too late. M. Clémendot seldom failed to attend these representations; when, on one occasion, finding the first tier of boxes thinly filled, and a vacancy near me, he came and placed himself at my side. He soon entered into conversation; praised in high terms the beauty, symmetry, and elegance of manner which characterised Sophia Miquel, and concluded by begging that I would allow him to offer me his arm and see me home. I thanked him civilly, but declined, alleging that I came to the theatre with General Viala, and his nieces, and should return with them, which I did.

The general had no lantern: I was considering how we might procure assistance, when a person, in whom I re-

cognised M. Clémendot, came behind us with a lantern already lighted. He had followed us purposely out of his way. The general lighted a wax taper, and, along with his nieces and M. Clémendot, took his leave.

The next day I thought no longer of these things, when Edward came, bringing with him intelligence of the state of your health, and that of my son. After some time passed in agreeable conversation, he quitted me, on a promise that he would return in less than an hour to take me to the promenade. I waited more than three. I had a suspicion where he was. The society of a fascinating woman makes time appear very short, and a lover may be pardoned if he forget an appointment with his sister.

Believing him to be with Rose Pierret, I went in search of him, but he was not there. I rose to depart, but she

kept me back, and said, in a significant tone of voice, "If you mean to see your brother, stay."—"You have seen him then?" She was silent. I pretended to be angry. She then acknowledged that Edward had been with her some time, and that he would return at eight to walk to the Foral, and urged me to join them.

I said to Mad^{selle} Pierret, that I would fetch my shawl, and inform my brother at the *Hôtel des Princes,* that he would find me waiting for him in her apartments. Rose commended me for this resolution, and proposed jellies after the promenade. I left her, but soon returned. Edward followed me closely. We went to the promenade. The evening was delightful, and the avenues were crowded with people. My brother, as usual, indulged a number of agreeable sallies, that contributed greatly to enliven the scene. We continued walk-

ing about an hour, and had passed and repassed several times eight or ten persons, of whom we did not recognize a single individual; when one of them, disengaging himself from his party, advanced towards us, and saluted my brother, calling him by his name. "Ah! is it you, Clémendot," said Edward; "pray who is of your party?" He replied, "Madame Moze, with several other ladies;" that he thought he had seen us before, and wished to ascertain the fact. "But my friend," said he, addressing my brother, "you cannot dispose of both arms, allow me to offer mine to your sister."

Edward left me, and as I was in good humour, I accepted M. Clémendot's offer.

After walking some minutes, Edward inquired whether he had fixed the day for his departure. "I go the day after to-morrow, and have a hundred tedious

visits to make. I shall come," whispered he, "to take leave of you, madam."—"Surely," I replied, "you are not serious. I spoke to you but yesterday for the first time; and besides, I am not in the habit of receiving visits."—"I believe you are much too polite to refuse me admission."—"Don't depend upon that."—"I will make the experiment," said he.—"Very well," I observed, "you will make it in vain."

Edward and his companion walked very fast. I perceived that M. Clémendot, on the contrary, walked at a very slow pace: I mentioned it. He excused himself on the plea of having corns. "Then," said I, "you ought not to be here, since we are going post haste."

He expressed his regret that he had not been able sooner to form an acquaintance with the accomplished Madame Manson, whose vivacity and ele-

gance of manners were the theme of universal applause. "Add," said I, laughing, "if you wish to complete the portrait—whose beauty is equal to all her other charms." I could not repress these pleasantries. I obliged him, notwithstanding, to redouble his steps, that we might overtake Rose and my brother.

It was now late. I proposed that we should all of us return home, which was agreed to. Edward then said that he was ready to expire of thirst; and that he wished to drink some table beer. "Let us go home," said Mad^selle^ Pierret, "you will find it there of a good quality;" and then turning to me said, "besides you promised to partake of my jellies." I was more inclined to sleep than hunger; yet I suffered myself to be persuaded, and was treated with excellent currant jelly; from which I felt a pain in the stomach, as I had

eaten it without appetite, and purely from complaisance. Not so the Aide-de-Camp: he continued to devour plate after plate, swallowing large spoonfuls without bread: any other person would have died of repletion, but unfortunately for me, he survived.

Edward, who has always a high flow of spirits, and great good humour, that evening exceeded even himself. He made me laugh so immoderately at the expense of poor Clémendot, that I began to be apprehensive he would perceive it, and feel offended—no such thing. Instead of this he began to sing, and pressed us, from time to time, in a fashionable lisp, 'to take a walk to the Foral.' "And your corns!" cried I. Edward paid no sort of attention to him. "Let us walk," repeated M. Clémendot again, for the twentieth time. Edward, after a moment's reflexion, said, "The weather is delightful:

I will call a coach. We will breakfast at Espalion, where we shall be supplied with excellen trout." I asked him if he had taken leave of his senses, and observed, that it required five hours to complete the journey. "Never mind," he replied, "we shall be back early to-morrow." Rose, fearing the displeasure of her father, declined; but after a vigorous resistance, was obliged to capitulate. My brother proposed that we should go only as far as *La Baraque de Flavin,* asserting positively that we should be back before seven, at which time M. Pierret would not have arrived from the country.

I was no longer sleepy, and seconded the arguments of Edward, in order to induce Rose to comply; promising her that should the adventure reach her father's ears, I would take all the blame upon myself. M. Clémendot was silent: he appeared altogether indifferent, but

followed us to Saint-Pierre, where we went to inquire for a coach.

Your son, who gave his orders in the tone of an adjutant-general,* was obeyed instantly. We set out a little before it dawned. Rose had no sooner entered the coach, than she was seized with a fit of despair: I thought she would have leaped out of the window: she had the appearance of a victim about to be sacrificed; but she had to contend with merciless ravishers, who far from being moved at her condition, answered her complaints only by peals of laughter.

Edward related so many surprising and ludicrous stories, that Rose, forgetting Rodez, her father, and all her fears, laughed at length as heartily as ourselves.

The coachman drove at a tolerable

* He filled this post in the old guard.

pace, and brought us to the end of our jaunt at half past four. Edward imagined he could eat a quarter of a goose: he reckoned without his host: it was Saturday, and the inn-keeper did not consider a man who suffers from cold at the extremities, entitled on that account to a dispensation. Eggs, salad, and cheese, were served up. As we had not slept, we desired coffee. A lump of sugar of the colour of yellow wax was found, after some difficulty, and eagerly contended for by the two officers. It was to no purpose they called for spirits: the landlord, ever prudent and on his guard, said that he *did not keep an article of this kind, on account of the rats.** At length, after an indifferent repast, we got into the coach, to the great satisfaction of Rose, who was in continual apprehension

* —of the cellar (*rats de cave*), a term applied by way of ridicule to excisemen.

of finding her father at home. On the road, Edward entertained us with a lively narrative of the various places through which he had travelled. M. Clémendot, desirous of assuming the air of a man favoured by the ladies, related his successes amongst them at Rodez; all of whom afterwards he cruelly abandoned to their fate. He mentioned the name of one, whose overtures he had rejected; of another, who was distractedly in love the moment she saw him; of another, who was unable to support the piercing expression of his eyes; and one, whose husband had surprised him with his wife.

"Oh!" said he, "I have been frequently the subject of conversation: unfortunate is the woman who incurs my displeasure."—"He might convince us, perhaps," said Edward, "of the truth of this, if we had never seen him: a handsome fellow, upon my word! and

very likely to turn the heads of the fair sex: look at him ladies."

You are to be told, my dear mother, that M. Clémendot is more than ordinarily plain. I will describe him: First, he is what we term in our language, *beffi*:* he has a mouth disproportionably large; a nose ill constructed; a look indicative of duplicity; he has lost all his hair, and speaks through his nose.

We will now examine his figure: he is a little taller than I am. I adhere to Edward's simile, who speaking of his legs, compares them to a double barrelled musket; add to this, his mania for breeches and black silk stockings; but what signifies the physical power, if the moral were of any value?

This, my dear mamma, is a feeble sketch of a being to whom, according to report, I made the greatest discoveries, and intrusted a secret which I

* One whose lower jaw is too prominent.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SAR...

refused to betray to a court of justice, notwithstanding the inquisitorial means employed for four months to extort it from me.

We reached Rodez in good time; our gallants quitted us at the foot of the declivity *les Cordeliers*. I accompanied Rose to her father's: he had not arrived, nor did he, that day: he sent to desire she would join him in the country.

When I got home, I threw myself upon my bed, and slept for some hours. The family had no idea of my having stayed out all night. About two in the afternoon, Edward came and told me he was going to St. Pierre along with Clémendot. "But," added my brother, "I shall not go before evening; I wish to see Rose before I take leave of her: you ought to go too."—"I have no objection." We went a moment after to the window. "I must leave you," said Edward; "I'll venture a wager Clé-

mendot is in search of me. Look," continued he, "there he is in the street." I remarked that he wore an elegant dress; and frill, silk breeches, and gold buckles; it was still, notwithstanding, the same figure. My brother called him in; he took possession of a chair before I thought of offering one. Edward told him this was not a time to indulge; that he must come to St. Pierre. "Good God!" cried M. Clémendot, "you had better go there yourself, I am fatigued; the heat is intolerable; I can go no farther." When I saw that he was contriving only excuses to be alone with me, I said, "I am going out, and can receive no company." This M. Clémendot comprehended, and he submitted to accompany Edward.

I went soon after to visit Rose; she was ready to set out for the country. I had scarcely been with her an instant, when Edward entered, attended by Clé-

mendot, the eternal Clémendot. My brother, who was tired of him, said, "Go about your business, you are troublesome." The seriousness with which this was said, disconcerted the poor Aide-de-Camp, and he judged it prudent to retire.

Towards the evening, my brother told us that he was going to fetch his horse. I stationed myself at the window, and saw a man conducted to the place of execution. "How can you stay there?" said Rose.—"Why should I not?" I replied, "Does he deserve any compassion? He is no doubt an assassin: look, he wears a red mantle. I could see with as little compunction the murderers of the unfortunate Fualdès."

Before the Cordeliers a great crowd was assembled, anxious to obtain a view of Jausion, who was interrogated that day. Edward had just told us that he

had seen him in the street, and that he looked very pale. "I have no desire to see him," observed Rose; "the very sight of him would turn me sick. I pity him; I would not be at Rodez if he were to be executed."

I am now confident that if Mad[selle] Pierret was present at the murder, she is indebted for her life to Jausion; or rather, that not having seen him there, she is concerned to find him accused.

I am inclined to think that the person of middle stature, who was supposed to be Jausion, may be some one else.

Edward now came once more; he waved his hand without dismounting his horse. He had embraced Clémendot, and taken leave of him, previous to the departure of the latter, with his general, to a remote province.

I remained some minutes longer with Mad[selle] Pierret. She had a white

veil, very much like one of mine, made of lace. "So then," observed I, "you adopt my fashions?" She did not say much in reply, but went into the room where a chest, containing her linen, lay open. I saw a large black veil, such as the Spaniards wear, and placed it on my head. "It is very beautiful," cried I to Rose; "where did you buy it?"—"In Paris."—"You have been then in Paris? it must have cost you a good deal of money."—"Oh yes! a great deal." She took the veil hastily, threw it into the chest, and locked it up. Her conduct surprised me. I did not know that any person had been seen wearing a veil in Bancal's house on the 19th of March. It was not possible to entertain any suspicion of Rose; but I confess her embarrassment very much astonished me.

I left her at six o'clock, and did not

see her afterwards, till her appearance before the tribunal, on the sitting of the 8th of September.

On my return home I supped, and was impatient to retire early to rest, when I heard a gentle rap at the door, and M. Clémendot entered. It was now very late. I desired him to leave the room. He answered that he was not in any particular haste. I would not for the world that my landlady should have seen a man in my apartments at night. She might have been expected every moment. After some deliberation I resolved to quit my room, and leave M. Clémendot by himself. In this I was so fortunate as to succeed. In about an hour I returned, and having searched every corner of the room, and satisfied myself that no one was there, I shut myself up, and having locked the door, stepped into bed.

The next day, on my return from

mass, a neighbour said to me, "You had this morning a visit from the General's Aide-de-Camp."—"I, a visit! I spoke to him at the theatre, for the first time, on Thursday last."—"That don't signify," she replied; "if he were not going away, he would attempt to pay his addresses, that he might afterwards expose you: you would not be the only one he has treated in this manner." I assured her that I held him in the greatest contempt.

After dinner I heard the creaking of boots, in the corridor that leads to my chamber, and two distinct raps at the door, in the interval of half an hour. At this time I was dressing, and did not therefore think proper to notice them. Some time afterwards I called to my landlady, Madame Lacombe, and requested her to bring me a sash from the milliner. I had omitted to lock the door inside. I heard another rap, and

flew to the door to turn the key, but too late, when *the man, who is any body but Sir Charles Grandison,* pressed violently forward. I detained him at the entrance, ready to sink with apprehension that Madame Lacombe might return, and find me engaged in a struggle with a man. My countenance wore the impression of such terror, and I conjured him so pathetically to withdraw, that at last he consented.

Madame Lacombe came back soon, and acquainted me that an officer had called about one o'clock, asking for Madame Manson, and that she had told him I was not at home. "I believe," added she, "it was your brother; he remained at the door a short time, biting his nails, and then went away."

"My brother," I remarked, "quitted me yesterday; if the gentleman of whom you are speaking should return, tell him I am not at home: with the ex-

ception of my father, I will see no one."

I went to the play with Mesd^{selles} Miquel. The performance was *Joconde, or les Coureurs d'Aventures.* I paid great attention to the music of the opera, which is very fine; when directing my eyes to the pit, in the interval between the acts, I perceived M. Clémendôt, who instantly vanished.

The curtain again rising, new objects presented themselves to my view, and made me forget this strange apparition; when at the end of the last piece, I heard a rustling behind me, and turning round, beheld M. Clémendot, who, darting at me a fierce and menacing look, went out.

I paid little regard to these indications of resentment, and went home very composedly.

A quarter of an hour afterwards, on my opening the door to fetch water, I

had almost fainted at the sight of Clémendot, who entering my room, obliged me to enter with him, and locked the door.

I might have called assistance, but my adversary was too contemptible to inspire fear, and I should have furnished matter of ridicule and conversation to the whole town, where little is necessary for this purpose. Alas! how much greater cause of remark have I supplied since! Let no one hope to fly from destiny!

From that dreadful night I date all my misfortunes! What have been the sorrows of a whole life, when put in competition with those that have overwhelmed me for the last few months! How many bitter tears have I shed! O my father, mother, brothers, my son! ties ever dear and sacred, that alone reconcile me to life! without you, with-

out the consolations of religion, I had made an attempt upon my life!

In the other world I shall no longer be reminded of the name of Fualdès!

General de Wautré had given a grand supper; Clémendot was there, and had taken, according to custom, an active part; he could scarcely support himself, and reeled at every step. He advanced towards me to embrace me, but I pushed him to the extremity of the room. I then desired him to go; but he told me, my entreaties were in vain, and that he would not go before three, the hour fixed by the general for his departure; adding, that he wished to sleep. He yawned repeatedly, and fell asleep, or pretended to do so. During this time I reflected on my situation, which was a very peculiar one; not that I feared him, as I have before remarked; for it was said, on his leaving Rodez,

that he carried with him bitter recollections. He had the character of a drunkard, debauchee, and of a man deeply involved in debt. People went so far as to say, that his creditors intended, on his departure, to compliment him with the favour of a tap on the shoulder.

When the gentleman had slept half an hour, and was somewhat recovered, I again urged him to retire. He told me he had something very interesting to communicate, and that he would confide it to me.

" Know," continued he, " a report has been circulated, that a young woman was at Bancal's during the murder. One person accuses Mad[elle] Avit. . . ." I interrupted him, saying, I could not believe she would enter a house of such notoriety; and that the perpetrators of the act would not have endured the presence of one who

might afterwards have denounced them. "Some people pretend," said he, "that you had made an assignation there." "Truly! It was likely I should wish to be implicated in the affair of Fualdès!"—"They add, that while you were in the house, Bancal's wife, hearing footsteps, concealed you in a place where you could see and hear every thing."

I looked at him with astonishment. "Come," cried he, "was it not you?" "Come, confess it was."—"Oh!" I replied, "certainly; there can be no doubt of it!"—"Poor creature, how interesting this makes you in my eyes! They say Bastide wanted to kill you, and that Jausion interposed. If you know the interest I take in the affair! If you could but conceive how deeply I am interested!"

I had not the smallest doubt that he was either insane or intoxicated. His drowsiness confirmed me in the last opinion.

He talked very loud. I begged him to lower his voice: he then began to sing. I gave him chocolate to induce him to be silent, and at last prevailed on him to retire.

I then carefully shut the street door; it was sometimes open on account of the different lodgers; and besides, closed so awkwardly, that when the bolt was not drawn, a mere push would open it. I could thus explain the sudden appearance of M. Clémendot in the corridor. It seems he had invited one of his friends to accompany him, to whom he said he came by appointment to visit me at midnight.

That gentleman certainly saw him enter the house where I lodge at the hour alluded to; he was subpœnaed to swear to this fact; but at the examination he did not appear.

Tuesday, 29th July, about seven in the evening, an officer of justice arrived,

and presented me with a summons. "You are under some mistake," said I, "I have no suit at law with any one."—"It is about M. Fualdès."—"Still less then does it apply to me; what have I to do with Fualdès?"—"I know nothing in regard to that," replied the man; "you will be so good as to come into court, M. Constant will explain the reason." I obeyed reluctantly, for I had not power to resist. On entering the hall I saw the judge, of whom I knew nothing, but who received me very politely.

He caused the oath to be administered. I trembled a little; I had never made an affidavit before, and it was a solemn act.

At least I have not to reproach myself with perjury. I *never* said before the magistrate that I had been in Bancal's house on the 19th of March.

I was asked what I knew of the

murder? to which I answered fearlessly that I knew absolutely nothing about it. "There," said M. Constant, "you see how news are fabricated; report says you were seen in Bancal's house."—"Who says so?"—"It is a common report," replied the magistrate.

My interrogatory was very short; I had nothing to disclose. I had yet time to take a walk with the sisters of Madame Gourdon, one of whom had lately been married. We went to the theatre together. A moment after I saw Mad[selles] Miquel enter with their uncle; they took their seat, scarcely appearing to notice me. I was surprised at this capricious behaviour, and suspected that some story had been told them to my disadvantage. But I had ample cause of astonishment, when I perceived the eyes of the whole audience upon me, and that I was become the object of general curiosity.

...RAJA SERFOJI'S ...

I examined every part of my dress; there was nothing in it of finery or bad taste: my presence at the theatre was no uncommon occurrence. On a sudden, I recollected the *summons*. This afforded an instantaneous ray of light. In the *great* town where I lived, much less was required to supply matter of observation. I turned towards M. Lacalmontie, who sat behind me, and inquired the grounds on which a report was spread, that I had been at Bancal's on the 19th of March. "I am not aware of the cause," he replied. I persisted in putting questions, and urged him to satisfy me; when the General, who sat close to me, lost all patience, and said in an animated tone, "Madam, you have acted imprudently; you confided your secret to a man who is without discretion, and the affair is public." I gazed upon him unconsciously, with a look of utter astonish-

ment. I had scarcely strength to offer any thing in the way of reply or justification. The curtain drew up. This too was not a place, or time, for explanation. I felt annihilated. I would sooner be condemned to count every bead in my rosary, and read every prayer in the missal, than be present at such a scene in future. I would have given the world if I could have retired without being perceived; but it was impossible. I had to endure the scrutinising search of every eye.

Yet this was the prologue only to the punishment in reserve. Clémendot came in. I thought he had quitted the place, no such thing: he intended to have done it, but was prevented. I had the mortification of being saluted by him, and of seeing him at my side during the greater part of the first act.

I turned my head another way to

avoid the sight of him: upon this he went and stationed himself in a box directly in front of me; so that nothing was left but the alternative of turning my back to the audience, or consenting to see perpetually the figure of a being become odious to me.

No representation ever appeared so tediously long. From that moment I renounced all plays, and am resolved religiously to keep my vow. As I rose to depart, Clémendot advanced towards me, and with the coolest effrontery imaginable, offered me his arm! I was incensed, and could scarcely suppress the indignation I felt. Perhaps it had been better for me to have shown it more unequivocally, for people have reproached me as having treated him with too much lenity.

M. Boyer and his wife conducted me home. I did not forget this time to bolt the outer door, nor to lock the door

of my own room twice. On my going to the window, which was open, I saw the shadow of a man. Presently a voice said, "*Open the door.*" I put down the window hastily, and closed the shutters. I then tried to sleep, but could not: a nervous fever attacked me, which I have had ever since, and from which I see no prospect of being relieved. I had time to make reflections during the night. I rose in the morning fatigued and out of spirits. The clock had not struck eight, when I heard a rap at the door. This was again an officer, who came to summon me before the magistrate: I obeyed, and found the king's solicitor, M. Constant and Clémendot, with whom it was intended to confront me. He was disconcerted on seeing me, and made several efforts, but in vain, to assume an air of composure: I, on the contrary, was inflamed with resentment; but recollecting that

anger can be productive of nothing good, I got the better of my feelings, and recovered my usual serenity of countenance. How many have censured this apparent moderation! According to them I ought to have insulted the Aide-de-Camp, and torn from his head the small quantity of hair that remained. In this manner, I should have proved, beyond a doubt, the falsehood of his evidence! In the course of the examination that took place on the 13th September, Bancal's wife struck one of the witnesses against her, and would have knocked him down, if they had not put her in irons. Is the world on that account less satisfied of her guilt.

M. Clémendot deposed, that I had acknowledged in conversation the fact of my being in Bancal's house on the 19th March. I positively contradicted the assertion, and contented myself with remarking, that falsehood was some-

times dearly paid for; and that I would recommend him to be upon his guard. I left the court, and M. Avit, registrar, made an offer of his arm, which I accepted.

Clémendot seemed disposed to follow us. I said I would sooner be imprisoned in the dungeons of the Cordeliers, than seen in his company. This was spoken aloud, and in so determined a manner, that he did not wait for a repetition. I had scarcely entered my room, when M. Julien* arrived. "I am authorized by your father," said he, "to request you will wait upon the Prefect." "Good God!" exclaimed I, "I am not acquainted with that gentleman: what can I say to him? I am ignorant of the whole affair: it is therefore an idle waste both of his time and patience."

* One of the judges of the civil tribunal at Rodez, and colleague and friend of M. Enjalran, Madame Manson's father.

"Never mind that," said M. Julien, "I shall come at two o'clock, and conduct you to him myself. It is your father's particular desire."

I made no reply. M. Julien left me, requesting me at the same time to dress, which I intended to have done. I had never in my life spoken to a judge, and therefore employed much care in adorning myself; but I have reason to believe the Prefect paid very little attention to it. I ought not to have instituted a comparison between this gentleman and M. de Termont; the latter of whom was particularly observant of dress and etiquette, as report says. The Prefect has often seen me both in dress and undress; and yet has never found cause of complaint. At one o'clock M. Julien came back. I was in readiness to go, but he told me, we had time enough for conversation. He

then said, he was commissioned by my father to say, if I had been in Bancal's house, that I ought, in justice, to confess it, notwithstanding the painful feelings such a declaration might excite; that he would pardon me, and never more allude to the subject, if I made an ingenuous confession. I protested that I had slept at home on the 19th of March, and had not been out the whole evening; and concluded by requesting that the family of M. Pal might be subpœnaed to confirm the truth of this assertion.

To prove an *alibi*, he observed, was no easy thing and the attempt unnecessary, as it was shown, by various depositions, that I had been at Bancal's. In conclusion he said the wife would be executed, and if in her last depositions she should declare I had been in the house at the time the murder was committed, I should be prosecuted without

doubt as an accomplice, since I persisted obstinately in denying it.

It was to no purpose to endeavour to undeceive him. I went with him to the Prefect, with whom, after the first salutations were over, he left me.

Of all the persons I have seen, in the course of my life, I know of no one who has made so strong an impression upon me. After having been in his presence at least sixty times, I feel the same emotions of awe. Judge what I must have experienced the first time! M. d'Estourmel* received me with that grace and elegance of manner, for which he is distinguished. He employed the most conciliating language to induce me to confess; assuring me that M. Clémendot in his deposition, had spoken of me in terms of the utmost respect; and was incapable of using the expressions which report had ascribed to him.

* The Marquis d'Estourmel, Prefect of the department of the Aveyron.

He said if I would acknowledge the facts stated in the deposition of that officer, he would be suffered to go, as he wished greatly to follow his General. "I have heard," said I, "that he affirms in his deposition my having mentioned the names of Bastide and Jausion; while, on the contrary, I never made the most remote allusion to them; this, if admitted, would bring them to the scaffold. Five witnesses will prove on oath, that M. Clémendot mentioned it at a coffee-house. After this, people will believe me to have been present at the assassination; that Bastide really intended to put me to death; and that Jausion interposed to prevent it." The Prefect again repeated his assurances that M. Clémendot had said nothing of the kind, and urged me to confess. He had in his possession, he remarked, evidence so decidedly

clear against me, as to leave no doubt in his mind of my being perfectly acquainted with the whole affair; it was better therefore to confess: for it was impossible that an officer, *brave and sensibly alive to honour*, could have invented the story; I had reason to expect, therefore, a serious affair between him and one of my brothers.

My father, too, he said, intended to prosecute him for defamation; and might involve himself in a process which would terminate, perhaps, in ruin to the family.

From the commencement I had foreseen the probability of one of these misfortunes; and I wrote in haste to my brother Gustavus, to detain Edward, and prevent his coming to Rodez. I desired him to send my child home, fearing they might take him from me, if I persisted in refusing to make confession.

The sequel has shown that my apprehensions were well founded. During my interview with the Prefect, I adhered firmly to the truth of my original statement; yet, when I returned home, and reflected on the alarming consequences of my continuing to deny all knowledge of the transaction, I said, "Let me offer myself as a sacrifice; the testimony of an approving conscience will console me; the world will believe me to have visited that infamous house; I alone shall know the contrary; and shall preserve, though in disgrace, the consciousness of integrity, and injured innocence."

This, my dear mother, was the calculation I made. It was erroneous, since you have found it to be so; but you were at a distance from me, and I had no time to consult you.

I sent for M. Julien; he came, and I told him, if he could obtain from my

father a declaration that he would not reproach me with my conduct, and would engage to pay my pension, punctually, without forcing me to reside with him in his house (what had I not to fear as a miserable prostitute from a mother and my brothers ?) I would disclose every thing. M. Julien assured me he had not a doubt of my father's acquiescence ; but that, not having authority to make terms, he would immediately ascertain what his dispositions were.

In the mean time, he advised me to write to the Prefect, and entreat another hearing.

He quitted me, saying he would soon return. I then addressed to the Prefect the following letter :

" Sir ;

" I thought I perceived you took a lively interest in behalf of M. Clémen-

dot. This consideration, united to the fears I entertain of being the cause of a duel, obliges me now to develope a mystery, impenetrable to all the world. Yesterday it was impossible: I was in a state of mind that baffles all description. In vain I endeavoured to conceal it from you; you saw the load with which I was oppressed. I will tell the truth; but will you deign to believe me? Can I rely with confidence on your secrecy? This is very difficult. Is not my deposition in the hands of the judges? Have I not subscribed it? I know not what will become of me. The life of my brother, however, will be no longer in danger, and my father will not have to fear the loss of his estate. Before I conclude, I must do justice to the honour of a brave officer, though at the expense of my own. All the blame will be imputed to me; I care not: I am prepared for every thing.

Am I not made for misfortune, and has not the cup of bitterness long since been full?

"M. Clémendot desires an interview. I consent, on condition of its being in your presence, and on my being indulged afterwards with a private audience. May heaven grant me strength to speak, and may you believe me! I do not expect it. At all events, I shall not have occasioned the death of any one. It is I only, perhaps, whose life is endangered. Condescend, Sir, to inform me of the hour when I may obtain an audience. I indulge the hope that my letter will be known to you only. Excuse the negligence with which it is written, and receive the assurances of my respect and consideration. Impressed with these sentiments, I have the honour to be, Sir, your very humble and obedient servant,

"E. Manson."

I had scarcely concluded, when M. Julien returned, to acquaint me that my father had accepted all my conditions. I sent my letter to the Prefect, who returned for answer, that he was at all times extremely willing to grant me an interview at any hour I chose to appoint—*the sooner the better*—his own words: I keep the letter.

As it was now late, I determined to wait till the following morning, and stepped, for an instant, into M. Pal's shop, whose house I had quitted in an evil hour, a month before. I repeat it, in an evil hour; because if I had not changed my lodgings, I should not have been at the theatre; and, consequently should not have had the fatal honour of an acquaintance with M. Clémendot.

The family, *at this time*, were so satisfied that I did not leave the house on the 19th of March, that they would

have deposed to the truth of the fact. Rosalie, the youngest daughter, reminded me of an expression I used the day after. I had exclaimed "*Good, God! we sung last night like people who have lost their senses; perhaps they were then murdering the unfortunate man.*"

This circumstance had altogether escaped me. Rosalie* brought it to my recollection. The family believed, and I have no doubt continue to believe, that I was with them on the 19th; but if they were even more convinced of it, they would not maintain it in a court of justice, from a dread of being involved in difficulties;—of its being said "*they were resolved, at any rate, to favour me.*"

They, however, are not the only people who have fears: there are many others. The affair of the murder has paralysed every one. Persons in pub-

* The youngest daughter of M. Pal.

lic situations are not without apprehensions; they avoid betraying an interest in my fate, from a dread of consequences. I, at the Capuchins, am a stranger to fear: separated from the world by iron bars, and a triple door; accused of being an accomplice in a murder, of all others, the most atrocious, I have no fear; I repeat it, I have no fear.

Do not speak to me of weak people; they are more dangerous than vicious ones. We cannot guard against evils in a state of which the sovereign is devoid of energy. A weak prince is commonly the precursor of a tyrant. An example of this kind has been furnished in our times. Louis XVI prepared the revolution, of which Napoleon reaped the advantage.

How wide a digression, you will say! It is not, perhaps, so irrelevant as it may appear; for if the death of M.

Fualdès be a cruel tragedy, the preceding reign was a series of cruel tragedies, of which it would be impossible to recount the number. I ought not to have pronounced the name of a certain person; it is a crime, even in the eyes of the gaoler, who fears he may get into a scrape, and lose his place: I have no fear of losing mine—it would be otherwise, were I with you, my dear mother, and my child.

I have forgotten where I left off. I spoke to you, I believe, of my visit to the family of M. Pal. I felt much satisfied, and had no doubt they would afford me the benefit of their evidence. I went away encouraging these hopes. The next day I repaired to the hotel of the Prefect.

I met there M. Clémendot, as I expected. Having formed my resolution, I said to him, "Since I must wipe off the aspersion on the honour *of a brave*

officer, I acknowledge that I confessed to you I was at Bancal's house on the 19th of March, but surely I never said that Bastide and Jausion were there."—He replied, "True," and the Prefect again assured me that he had not made any such declaration.

Upon this, he went into an adjoining room, where he could hear every thing; the door besides was left half open. When I was alone with M. Clémendot, I expressed a hope that he would now be satisfied; adding, "I suppose you will set out on your journey immediately." He appeared confused, and indeed had cause to be so; my conduct must have astonished him. He said, no doubt, to himself, along with M. Jacques, in the play, *What! have I guessed it, without even thinking of it?*

He conjured me to conceal nothing. I advised him to pack up his portmanteau, follow the General, and leave me

at rest. The Prefect, who plainly perceived that our conversation was not that of two lovers, hastened back, and sent M. Clémendot away. A moment after, my father was announced. He entered, and surveying me with a stern countenance, "You dishonour your family," said he, "by refusing to make the confession which justice demands from you." The Prefect then observed, that I had acknowledged I mentioned to M. Clémendot the circumstance of my being present in Bancal's house. "Yes," I rejoined, "but it was merely to banter M. Clémendot. I never was in Bancal's house in my life."

At these words my father became furious. "Whom will you persuade," interrupted he, "that it was possible for you to be carrying on a joke of this description; who will believe it?" I still persisted; when he assured me he would throw himself at the feet of the

king, and obtain an order to shut me up the rest of my life; and that I should bid an eternal adieu to my country and my child.

I was very little terrified by these menaces. I could not believe that such tyranny would be exercised under the reign of a Bourbon.

My father added, that he should live to see me brought to a scaffold. "Well," I replied, "I shall know how to conduct myself if I go there; I shall not be tormented by the consciousness of any crime, and shall die without remorse."

It was then my father lost all command of himself, and burst into tears. "Unhappy girl!" he exclaimed, "have you no regard for your family?—a father who never deviated from the path of honour—who showed you the way to it. You reduce him to live in disgrace, and embitter his last moments.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S

You plunge a dagger into the heart of your unhappy mother; she is on her bed of sorrow, scarcely a spark of life remains! Your brothers are driven to distraction; and your child,—your child, what kind of inheritance do you leave him?"

It would require a more eloquent pen than mine to describe what I felt at that moment. When I saw my father weep, I was no longer mistress of myself. A fit of phrensy seized me, such as overpowered me when I thought little Edward was expiring in my arms. The Prefect, who was not an unmoved spectator of this dreadful scene, induced my father to withdraw, as he did not think violent measures would be successful.

When we were alone, he spoke to me in so friendly a manner, that, overpowered by his kindness, as well as the recollection of my father's grief, I ad-

mitted I had been in Bancal's house; but said that I did not recognise any body there. My father came back; he had in some degree recovered himself. He asked me what I was doing at Bancal's? I thought, I replied, I had observed a man enter, whose conduct I was watching; when some person seized me in a narrow passage, and led me I knew not where. I was extremely embarrassed; I did not know the house, and was yet called upon to swear to particular circumstances. My father, turning to the Prefect, said, "She was, no doubt, in the little room near the kitchen.—" Well," said I to myself, "there is a little room; it is important to me to know it."—" We must bring her to the house," added my father.—" This evening," answered the Prefect, "I mean to be there myself."—" It is giving you too much trouble," said my father; "we shall go along with M.

Julien and Bruguière, the registrar, who may carry the keys."—The Prefect insisted on accompanying us. It was decided, that M. Julien should conduct me at nine o'clock to the hotel of the Prefect, to meet my father, and that we should all proceed thence to Bancal's house.

M. Julien was punctual to the hour. He conducted me to the Prefect, who was in his study, waiting for us. My father came soon after. They again put several questions; among others, "What I did in the little room?" I said I had fainted; that I had not seen or heard any thing; that some person came to take me away without speaking, and led me to the street. At this moment Bruguière entered with the keys. "Lead the way," said my father, "and open the doors; we will follow. It is impossible," continued he, "that they should not have spoken

to you."—"Come," said the Prefect, "admit they spoke to you."—"No," I repeated, "not a syllable."—"Well, then, they wrote?" I paused a moment, and said, "They wrote on a slip of paper, '*If you speak, you shall die!*'" Anxious to escape persecution, by means of pretended discoveries, I gave occasion only for other questions.

It was past ten when we reached Bancal's house. M. Julien gave me his arm. The Prefect and my father went in first. I trembled. Imagine your daughter in a place stained, as she believes, by murder! When I saw the table on which the unhappy Fualdès, it is said, lay stretched out; the house deserted and gloomy, like the cave of Trophonius; I was struck with such horror, that I fell at the foot of a bed, and, in my fall, received a violent blow on the shoulder. Vinegar was applied,

which restored me to my senses, and again the questions were renewed. I was so impatient to leave the house, that I said, "*Yes,*" to every thing. As they were desirous to ascertain whether it was possible, from the little room, to hear and see what was passing, M. Julien shut himself up there. I felt happy that I was not called upon to make the experiment myself. At length, however, I entered it, with the whole party. I told them I believed this was the place where I lay concealed; that it had a window which exactly corresponded with the one I saw before me; and that I did not ascend any steps. We quitted this terrible chamber at last: I trembled from the dread of being shut up in it: you know I am half inclined to credit the existence of ghosts. The Prefect, who perceived my alarm, several times threatened to bring me back there, if I did not con-

fess every thing. We returned to his house, where I remained till midnight. However, I said nothing more, except that the person who conducted me into the street, followed me as far as the Place de Cité, near the draw-well.

We left the hotel, and in crossing the yard, I said to M. Julien, "I will not come here again, the Prefect obliges me to say too much." I added, in a whisper, "*more even than I know.*" The next day I received a message from the Prefect, who having been informed of the expression I had used, desired to speak to me. I had just finished dressing, when Victoire came to me. She made me promise to call at her lodging, and acquaint her with the result of the interview. I agreed, provided it were not too late in the evening.

On this occasion, I completed the deposition you have read, and signed it. I passed eight hours, successively re-

peating the same story; and you, my dear mother, know how pleasing such an employment must prove to me.

In conclusion, the Prefect acquainted me, that M. Clémendot had assured him I was dressed in men's clothes on the evening of the 19th of March. I denied it in positive terms. "This," remarked the Prefect, "could not be an invention." As I saw no inconvenience in concurring with him, I said, "Well, it is true, I was in men's clothes." My coat had no existence but in imagination; yet fearing they might desire to see it, I added hastily, "The pantaloons were thrown into the fire; I have only the spencer left, therefore don't give yourself the trouble of looking for it." The Prefect then fixing his eyes upon me, with a penetrating glance, said, I had burned the pantaloons because they had stains of blood upon them. I answered, "*Very well, it is true; they*

were stained with blood." At these words I felt that I might be considered an accomplice. But I was then so weary of depositions, so thoroughly fatigued, and so much perplexed by entreaties, that I said whatever occurred to me, in order to escape the sooner from the Prefect, and take something to support nature. It was high time; for at five o'clock in the evening, I had not tasted food.

Victoire came in the early part of the night, impatient to learn what had passed. I repeated to her, word for word, the whole deposition; and made her sensible, if she alluded to it, she would be subpœnaed; wishing to ascertain how far I might confide in her; what I related was by no means a secret. I do not easily repose confidence in any one.

But though I convinced her how much it was her interest to be silent

(for she said she would not for the world be called upon as a witness), I could not restrain her propensity to talking. I saw her again the next day, and on my inquiring whether she had kept her word, "Oh! yes," said she.—"I'll venture a trifle, however, that you have said something to your husband?"—"Yes, but he won't mention it again."—"Very well, take care; you would not like to be summoned to a court of justice." *

* Here, perhaps, Madame Manson does not insist sufficiently on a circumstance worthy of remark. It is evident she has not consulted any professional man in the revision of these memoirs. The strongest charge urged against her, by those who contend for the truth of her deposition before the Prefect, is grounded on the statement made to Victoire. It is not difficult to conceive, that she may have yielded to long and numerous interrogatories; to the pressing entreaties of a magistrate who inspired her with awe; to the disgust of repeating as truths, facts which

Tears started in her eyes when she heard me talk in this manner, and she left me.

I passed a sleepless night, and began to be sensible of the dangerous consequences of my confessions to the Prefect. I wrote, the preceding evening, the following note:—

"Hear me, Sir, in the name of every thing sacred; I entreat you, hear me; and take pity on the disordered state of

were not credited; to the shame of retracting what she had asserted; in fine, to the stern authority of a parent so singularly prepossessed against her: but what ascendancy could *Victoire* exert over her? Where was the necessity, the inducement, to relate the same story to a chambermaid? She did not say, however, "I have been in Bancal's house; I saw the whole transaction; they spared my life," &c.; but, on the contrary, "I *told* the Prefect," &c. An important distinction must be made between the language of mere narrative, and a confirmation of it.

my mind! In you alone I confide. If it be not too late, endeavour to recal my deposition. I am half distracted! I have not taken food all day. I am incapable of reflexion. To-morrow, if you will grant me time till to-morrow, I will make every disclosure. Oh! take compassion upon me; I am guilty only of indiscretion! In haste.

"I have the honour to be, &c.

"E. MANSON."

I obtained, in answer, the promise of a new audience.

I could not be insensible of the bold step of contradicting what I had before asserted to be true. Yet what interpretation could be given to the motive on which I acted? Cold and indifferent, M. D'Estourmel could not be made to comprehend the influence which a warm heart, and vivid imagination, have upon the conduct. It is true, he had

been present at the scene between my father and myself, but he does not imagine it would induce me to make a false deposition. I will explain, to a beloved parent, the powerful cause that led me to declare I had seen what, in truth, I never saw. It was strongly insinuated, that my father took an interest in the fate of the accused, of Jausion in particular. I knew it, and had no doubt he was acquainted with the confident persuasion of many, that he interfered and prevented me from making discoveries. I saw his despair, and was on the rack.

Yet the idea of perjury continued incessantly to haunt me, and at length overpowered my determination. I therefore wrote to the Prefect the following letter, and carried it to him myself:—

"I am unworthy of your kindness; abandon me, Sir, to my fate: let me

feel the full weight of your displeasure.

"You have begun to unsettle me, follow up the blow, and drive me to distraction. I am nearly distracted already. I intended to have thrown myself at the feet of the first president, and have made full confession; but no, it is to you, and to you alone, I will reveal it. Moderate your resentment; in the name of heaven, moderate your resentment. Forget the three painful days I made you pass. Recollect the difficulty you have had in extorting from me what you call *the truth*: recollect all the circumstances that preceded my pretended confessions, all the menaces that have been employed against me. Do you find, after all, that my deposition carries with it an appearance of probability? Such an appearance was necessary. If you command it, if my father believe his honour really

compromised in this affair, I will persist in that deposition to the hazard of my life. I have compared, have considered every thing. Advise me, my dear Sir, do not drive me to despair. I will do every thing, yes, every thing for you, whose kindness impresses me with the liveliest gratitude, and renders me anxious to deserve it; and for a father, who has never done me justice. I repeat it, I will submit to the will of both.

"It is clear that my deposition implicates none. The public is persuaded I was in Bancal's house. A witness arrived, I understand, yesterday, who undertakes to aver, that he met me there by appointment. This is incredible; it can be proved, beyond a doubt, that some other woman was present: two women were not there. I shall be accused of a gross imposition in the presence of the judges, and before an

immense assemblage of people. In such an event the honour of my father will be seriously affected, and my reputation is gone for ever. At the thought of this, my understanding is affected: I lose my senses: I shall lose the power of utterance. I am before you; dispose of my life as you think proper: it is in your hands. I did not dare confide this letter to any one. Yesterday, and this morning, I learnt a number of circumstances, all conspiring against me; it is of no consequence, I will acquaint you with them all. Pardon me, Sir; I intreat you, a thousand times, pardon me.

"E. MANSON."

I forgot to mention, that on my return from the Prefect in the evening, I was accosted by M. Arseau, the counsel retained in behalf of Madame Jausion, who said, "How can you suffer your-

self to be interrogated at the Prefecture? The Prefect exceeds his authority; you ought to protest against an act of such injustice." I paid very little attention, and quitted him without reply; I believe without even having saluted him. I had taken no food, and was extremely hungry.

I mentioned, my dear mother, that I carried the letter myself to the Prefect; he read it in my presence, with the expectation, no doubt, of ample confessions; but, on my proceeding to deny the charge of being present at Bancal's, he assumed an air of countenance so severe, that by a dreadful and incredible act of weakness, I ended by admitting afresh, *that I had been there!*

I withdrew in a state of phrenzy. It was late. Your cousin Planard came, for a moment, to see me. She began a long discourse; I say long, if I may judge from its preamble.—Without

doubt, she had chosen a fit opportunity for preaching! I was in a high fever; it did not allow me to remain an instant in any place. I traversed my apartment in every direction, pacing it with unequal steps, till at length, grown frantic, I quitted her abruptly, and flew into the street.

Night was now coming on. I went and knocked at the door of the Abbé Brast, my confessor; his servant told me he had walked out, and would not return before nine o'clock. On my return, I met Madame Pal and her two daughters, who invited me to accompany them home; I did so; I was no longer myself. I drew a picture of my situation: they pitied me, and were all in tears, except the father: they lamented they had ever known me.

I left them, in order to advise with M. Brast; to whom, after apologising for my not having consulted him sooner, I

stated all that had occurred. He said, whatever might be the consequences of my deposition, I must not persist in adhering to it, if it were false; that nothing could authorize perjury; that I judged erroneously, when I conceived that my evidence implicated no one but myself; that the deposition was pointed strongly against Bancal's wife, since I proved clearly, that the assassination had been committed in her house.

I acquiesced in the pertinency of his observations, and promised him to be more circumspect in future. He recommended me not to be dispirited, but to address myself in prayer to God, who can effect every thing; to continue firm in my obedience to his will; and never more to deviate from truth, notwithstanding the menaces that might be employed to shake my resolution.

I took my leave. This sincere and upright man could pour balm into the

afflicted soul. His exhortations restored me to peace, and I tasted something of repose during the remainder of the night. The day after (Sunday) a person, having the appearance of a servant, brought me a note, couched in these terms, without saying from whom it came :

" Being obliged to leave town this morning, I request, as a favour, you would come to the house where Galtier's children are : it is the third on the right as you go from the cathedral to the Lyceum, and near Jouery's. I should be most happy to see you before my departure. I salute you."

I answered, that I could not accept the invitation ; at the same time I declared that I knew nothing of the murderers of M. Fualdès.

On my return from mass, I found my little amiable Edward, who had just arrived. I now felt myself relieved from

the pressure of an anxious burden, and should have had courage to brave an army. My father, who was informed by the Prefect of my prevarications, sent for me. I carried my son along with me: a scene of great violence and altercation ensued. At length, in the hope of being dismissed, I engaged anew to adhere to my deposition before the Court of Montpellier; trusting that, antecedently to any final decision, I should be able to convince him of my innocence. He threatened to deprive me of my child: I had it in my arms, and said, "Let any man take it from me at his peril!" The little creature clung to my neck, and fell asleep. I availed myself of the first occasion that was afforded me of withdrawing, and having first awoke Edward, returned home. A person now came to me, sent by Madame Pons, who expressed a wish to see me. I made answer, that I could

not receive her in the day time, as this would be remarked; but that she might contrive to come at nine o'clock, during the play. After dinner, I waited on the Prefect, and told him I was resolved to adhere to my deposition; but I debated the point so frequently, and urged so many circumstances by way of qualification, that he saw I was not much to be depended upon, and said, "You have seen somebody; they have tampered with you."

I confessed I had received an anonymous note, the hand-writing of which was unknown to me (this is true), though Madame Pons has been asserted to be the author, a thing not impossible. I firmly believed it to be written by M. Arseau, and for that reason, without minutely examining it, I gave it to the Prefect. I acknowledged also, that Madame Pons intended to see me in the evening. "You do wrong," said

he, "to receive her." I then observed if the lady by coming to see me involves herself in any danger, I shall refuse to receive her; but if it affect me only, I shall certainly not close the door against her." In conclusion, I said I cared but little whether she were sister, or sister-in-law of the parties accused, as I saw her in no other light than that of a benefactress.

This admission was clearly an act of folly in the extreme. If I had kept the secret, the Prefect would never have posted gens d'armes under my window; all the world would have been ignorant of my interview with Madame Pons; and the story that she presented me with 6,000 francs, as the price of my silence, would never have been invented.

I quitted the Prefecture at sunset, and went home, pleased with the thought of embracing my son, and having him

with me during the night. I put him to bed, when, about nine o'clock a rap was heard at the door, and Madame Pons made her appearance. She had disguised herself in order to see me. How thin she was grown, and how altered! I fancied I should scarcely have known her. She entered attended by a servant, who sat down at some distance from us, and fell asleep.

The first question she put was, "Have you been in Bancal's house?" I answered, "No."—"But you have deposed in the affirmative?"—"Very true."—"You are mad!"—"I acknowledge it."—"What is become of your character for firmness? I do not recognise a single feature of the magnanimity you were used to display under misfortune. Will you persist in maintaining a false deposition?"—"Oh! no," rejoined I, "do not suspect me of such madness."—"Be on your guard,

Madam; really you sink below yourself: nothing must induce you to trifle with an oath."

After a conversation that lasted little more than a quarter of an hour, she rose to depart, from a dread of being surprised: for I had alarmed her by observing, that she would be the cause, perhaps, of my sleeping in prison the next day. This made her extremely anxious to go; but I began to laugh, and begged her to remain till the play was over, and the streets cleared of people. We talked about the death of Madame Colrat, and other things, which have escaped me. I recollect only asking if it were true, as had been reported, that the night before, Jausion had called for a dagger, when he heard of my having been subpœnaed? She assured me it was an absurd calumny, and that her brother-in-law was perfectly composed.

This lady quitted me after midnight,

and the following morning I dispatched this letter:

TO THE PREFECT.

"It is in the sanctuary of justice; in the presence of its venerable ministers; of God himself, who hears me and will judge me; that I will speak the truth.

"I declare that the deposition I subscribed originally is the only legitimate one. All the confessions I have since made have been wrung from me by violence, and the dread of being the cause of murder.

"What have I not had reason to fear! On the one hand, I see my brothers engaged in a duel with Clémendot; where, of necessity, one of the party must die: on the other, I tremble for myself. I am menaced with an order from the king, which exiles me from my native country, and deprives me even of my child, the only source of happiness left to me. The means of subsistence are

withheld. A father in tears, tells me that his honour depends on my deposition. In the middle of the night I am conducted to a place of horror; inferences are drawn from the effect of such a scene upon my mind; and I am barbarously threatened with close confinement, if I refuse to speak. I am assured that there are witnesses who directly contradict me in point of evidence.

"The public, ever in search of food to gratify abase propensity, invent the most atrocious calumnies.

"I stand alone; unassisted by advice; without counsel; without support. What mind could support the shock of so many accumulated ills? I sunk under them. A nervous fever; want of sleep and of nourishment; despair—robbed me of my senses. I said things of which I have not even the most distant recollection. For a moment the energy of my character forsook me;

but I shall find it again, and will exert it.

"Is it reasonable to expect that before an august tribunal, and in the presence of a full assembly, I should confirm a false oath, and this in order to convince the world of my having been, during the night, at a house of ill fame, when a dreadful crime was committed there? Is not the honour of a family compromised by such an admission?

"I declare, once more, solemnly, whatever be the consequences, I never entered Bancal's on the 19th March, nor even before the commission of this atrocious act. I was ignorant of the existence and situation of that house. I am as desirous as any one to bring the delinquents to justice. If I knew who they were; if I could throw a single ray of light on this mysterious affair, no consideration should restrain me.

But as on the 19th March, at six in the evening, I was engaged with the family of M. Pal, and did not go out before the 20th, at nine in the morning, let my brothers, if they think proper, fight M. Clémendot; let my family perish; I will never confirm a falsehood, by a declaration that would tend to degrade us for ever.

"I am prepared to encounter every thing. The mystery, I sincerely trust, will be developed. Meanwhile I declare that I am resolved to adhere to my original deposition. I will maintain the truth of it on my trial, and during the remainder of my life. I subscribe myself ENJALRAN MANSON."

In this letter the Prefect affects not to recognize my style of composition. It has been supposed to proceed from the pen of M. Romiguière; who, how-

ever, arrived only seven days after it had been written The fact of my being the author is so clear, that I had not yet finished, when a tipstaff came to summon me to appear before the court immediately, without giving me time to read it. I slipped it into my ridicule, and rose to follow him.

At that instant a message came from my father, who desired to speak with me. I went immediately, and told him he should not detain me, as I was in haste to attend the Vice-President, and must not keep him waiting. He surveyed me with a look of suspicion, and asked me what I intended to say at the tribunal? I replied, "Truth, nothing but the truth," and communicated the kind of declaration I had made in my letter, where there is a sentence not completed, for I wanted time.

I certainly did not imagine that any

thing of mine would be transmitted to posterity, or that my name would ever become remarkable.

I leave you to judge of my father's countenance as he read this letter. He stormed, grew perfectly frantic, and forbad my going to the tribunal; saying he would speak immediately to the *Juge instructeur*. I took advantage of his absence to leave the room.

The sight of my child inspired me with courage, and enabled me to support the dreadful tortures they inflicted on me.

After dinner, the Prefect desired me to see him. This was on the 4th of August. I found him alone, in his study, and put into his hands the declaration which my father had returned. He read it, and rising from his seat, bade me await his return, and in the interval, seriously weigh the consequences. I walked about some time,

and had leisure to acquire some knowledge in geography, by tracing in a map the department of the Aveyron. I heard the sound of footsteps in the grand saloon; and losing all patience, was on the point of retiring, when M. Dognat came to me, and requested me, in obliging terms, to wait a moment longer. The Prefect soon afterwards came, accompanied by the Procurator General, by M. Julien, and my father; who launched into bitter invectives, and behaved with so much violence, that the Prefect begged him to withdraw, as he was not, to adopt his own expression, "sufficiently cool." On his departure, M. Maynier (the King's Procurator) addressed himself to my fears. There is scarcely a misfortune which he did not anticipate as likely to befal me. I continued, however, unalterably fixed in my resolution; attentive only to truth, and the exhortations of

my confessor. I could not divest myself of apprehensions that my child would be taken from me; and under the influence of this impression, addressed the following letters to the Prefect, in order to solicit his protection:

"Once more, Sir, I presume on your kindness, and entreat you to hear me. Do not regard me with contempt: it serves only to deprive me of the power of speaking when I appear before you. No one can appreciate better than I the value of a noble behaviour; nor is there any to whom you have given greater proofs of it, than to myself. Can you believe that, in return, I should offer only a tissue of improbable stories; and insult you by uselessly trifling with your valuable time? You cannot imagine it, Sir; I am convinced you cannot. But why do you permit me to ask your advice, on condition only of my

acknowledging myself an eye witness in the affair of M. Fualdès? Is it ever too late to speak truth? Do not, oh! do not, I conjure you by every sacred feeling, abandon me! be yet my protector! My destiny is in your hands; if I have offended you, impute it to a want of discretion. Save my family, Sir; it is for them I implore you. Compassionate my unhappy father, and my child.

"Were it possible for you to urge me to persist in falsehood, I should promise it in vain. I stand on the brink of a precipice; will you not lend me assistance? Have you not assured me, that you had the power; and that if I had committed an offence, you could procure for me pardon? Convince me, M. Prefect, that the interest you have deigned to take in my behalf, was independent of existing circumstances, and that my family has some claim to your regard. I always make common

cause with them: my interests are inseparable from their's. Oh! that I only were to be pitied! I should not complain. Pardon me, Sir, when I repeat, that it was never my intention to offend any, much less one to whom I am so deeply indebted. Be kind enough to receive the assurance of this sentiment, and of my respect. I have the honour to be, &c.

"E. MANSON."

To the Same.

"Yes, Sir, I am determined! A moment longer, and I had said every thing. But my safety is involved; no matter, I will relate every thing. You are responsible—for the secret in particular. My deposition, you will see, is a mixture of truth and falsehood. I have never been at Bancal's, and yet I must be considered as having been there. For God's sake pity me!

"E. MANSON."

RAJA SERFOGI'S

I was sensible that I had offended him by the false assertions into which I had been betrayed, and did not know how to extricate myself. My father desired to see me; I went, and found him with my brother Gustavus. An extraordinary scene ensued. There is no epithet of reproach or invective in the language, which they did not apply to me. In the midst of this confusion, Amans entered: he completed the trio, and performed the part assigned to him with great science and effect. The music was fine, and lasted four hours without intermission. My son, however, who had no more taste for it than I, grew very impatient; and pulling at my dress, urged me to go.

I repeated once more to my father, that the prospect of certain death would not induce me to assert a falsehood in court; and that no promise of the kind could be depended on.

"As to you," said I, weeping, and turning towards my brother and Amans, "you have no right to disturb me. You stretch me on the rack. To you I will acknowledge, if you wish it, that I alone assassinated Fualdès; but to the court I will speak the truth, and nothing but truth."

Amans, in his deposition, completely changed the expression. He pretends I said, "*To you I will acknowledge, if you wish it, that Jausion conducted me to the well of the Place de Cité.*" I never alluded to Jausion's name on that occasion. Your nephew, fearing perhaps to involve me more deeply, has entirely changed the terms of the declaration, and very fatal consequences have been the result. The counsel retained by M. Fualdès, junior, the civil party, availed himself of this deposition, and it has contributed, in no slight degree, to Jausion's condemnation.

‡

I succeeded in making my escape from my father to the entire satisfaction of little Edward, who said, "These people will always tease you; tell them you have been at Bancal's, and they will let you alone."

A few days after, I saw the daughters of M. Pal, who censured me greatly for the part I had acted; and told me they maintained every where that it was *impossible* I should have been out at night without its being remarked. "Your confession," said they, "makes us pass for fools; or, what is infinitely worse, for people who are inclined, at all events, *to favour you*." I begged them not to commit themselves by discovering an interest in my fate; and remarked, that as our own safety touched us more sensibly than that of others, we ought never to lose sight of it.

Palsou* paid me a visit; he passed

* M. Pal, junior. He is designated by a diminutive.

three hours in the hope of surprising me into a confession. There were frightful depositions, he reported, against me; that Madame Colrat's agent pretended to have made an appointment with me at Bancal's house. I know M. Lieberjol well: he is a man of humour, and fond of joking; but surely on an occasion like the present, he is incapable of it.

Palsou went on to state, that three persons had seen me crossing the Place de Cité on the evening of the 19th of March. He concluded by saying, he knew something that would certainly oblige me to confess, if it were revealed. "Well, tell it me then," cried I.—"It has been entrusted to me in confidence: if you would communicate your secret, I might be disposed, perhaps, to inform you of mine." I perceived the artifice, and assured him of my ignorance of the whole affair.

Reflecting on what had passed at this interview, and the strong prepossessions of the public against me, I could not help concluding that a woman really had been present, who was taken by mistake, for me. This supposition, by degrees, was converted into a certainty, except I chose to disbelieve the testimony urged in support of it.

From the day of my receiving the second summons, I confined myself to my room, and quitted it only in order to repair to the Prefect, or go to mass.

I was become an object of aversion and contempt. Accused of a profligate disregard of morals, and of abetting the cause of murder; my condition is deplorable. Had my son, who soothes me by his caresses, and diverts me by his little reasonings, been wrested from me, grief would have destroyed me.

I wrote the following letter to the Prefect:

"Sir;

"By what fatality have I plunged myself into an abyss, from which it is impossible to extricate myself, without the interposition of a miracle! The greatest of my misfortunes originates, no doubt, in the circumstance of my having lost your favour; and, what is more afflicting, your good opinion. Into what calamity have I fallen? Why have I deviated from truth? What consideration has been powerful enough to induce me to quit, for an instant, the road it pointed out; and this merely to gratify the caprice of magistrates, who are not to be convinced that I sacrificed myself; and who load me with injurious suspicions? My heart is broken; I am filled with a gloomy despair; I can no longer recognise myself.

"I think you said you had made dis-

coveries that placed human nature, of which you wish to entertain a better opinion, in a very unfavourable light. Oh! Sir, what information have I not derived in the course of a single week! What experience does not adversity supply! I have passed my life in a state of seclusion from the world, with which I was little anxious to be acquainted; and but for a passionate love of theatrical amusements, might yet have lived unknown. What has the world to expect from me when it is so incensed against me? Whom have I injured? whose hatred have I merited? Surely I never provoked the envy of any person. I am without fortune; nature has imparted to me neither beauty nor genius; if some partial admirer have given me credit for talent, I clearly show I am devoid of common sense. I have enemies, I know not why; but this truth is too evident to re-

quire demonstration: it is I who forge all the darts that are pointed against me.

"I see myself obliged to contend with a family, agonised by despair; with a whole town; a department; France itself; they cry aloud for vengeance, and will have it. Heaven is just; the crime is unexampled. But am I the only one disposed to protect assassins? Is it likely that I should exert myself to defend the crime? I who shuddered at its atrocity; who declared incessantly that the punishment inflicted by law was not adequate to the offence; and that the old maxim of *requital** should be revived? Oh! if in this affair I am not entirely exculpated, I desire—death. Is it not to be preferred to a life of infamy?

"Pardon me, Sir, if I presume too much upon your patience; I am solicitous only to appear less criminal in

* Lex talionis.

your eyes by a confession of my error; if I have not forfeited all claim to consideration, after having betrayed a want of confidence in one who did every thing to deserve it.

"The other object I have in view will, doubtless, be more easily obtained. It is not a request of life or liberty: these benefits, I repeat it, Sir, are of little value to me; but my child, my Edward, am I condemned to be separated from him? I feel no longer devoted to my country; it refuses to do me justice; I shall become a citizen of the world: wherever peace and impartiality may be found, there will I fix my residence.

"I throw myself at your feet, and implore your protection; you yourself, perhaps, may become a father one day; you can have but an imperfect idea of my sufferings. I have given you offence, but have I not apologised

already? Can revenge be found among so many traits of goodness, magnanimity, and fine feeling? Convince me that virtues still exist in the 19th century: I have never doubted that you are a living instance of them, and never shall: it is then to you alone I address myself, to you whose indignation I have provoked; you will yet compassionate me, will yet prevent the forcible separation of my child.

"*If I had been drawn voluntarily into the commission of a crime, I might obtain pardon.* Should then an act of mere imprudence, of nothing but imprudence; a moment of sensibility; a false calculation;—be visited with so much severity? A sense of gratitude, Sir, influencing me, has been the cause of my misfortune: it inflames the public resentment, and renders my justification so difficult, that I cannot expect deliverance but from heaven.

"I think I mentioned that I received my education in the country: you must have perceived, without difficulty, that it has been neglected: a perfect stranger to what is termed etiquette, how greatly must I have shocked you, by the awkwardness of my behaviour, and the choice of my expressions! I had never been in the presence of a magistrate, nor ever paid respect to any one except my father, who will not, I trust, in this particular instance, accuse me of deficiency.

"Pardon me, Sir, I implore you, pardon me for the sake of the intention; do not repeat to me, that *my sole object has been to trifle with you;* of what monstrous conduct do you think me capable? Would such an intricate maze of duplicity ever have been traced?

I finish this long letter, and I send it with the hope that you will burn it, and that it may be read by you alone.

I could unfold . . . . Oh! if I were not a mother! . . . Never, no never . . . You are far from being acquainted with my character. Allow me to entreat you will not show my letter; it is nonsense—a mere tissue of absurdities; give it what name you please: what can you expect from a mind half distracted? Believe, however, that I shall always retain a grateful recollection of your kindness. Condescend to accept this assurance, as well as that of the sentiments of regard with which

"I am, &c.

"E. MANSON."

He was from home. About this time some persons, unknown to me, came and delivered letters containing a request that I would visit houses which they pointed out, but of which I knew nothing. I returned shortly, a verbal message, stating that I could not

comply. Reports were spread that I had confessed to Amans, my brother, and Rose Pierret, the having been present at Bancal's on the 19th. I rubbed my eyes to ascertain if I were really awake or asleep; and began to inquire of myself, whether the good people of the place had lost their senses, or I mine.

On the 14th August the court arrived from Montpellier. The festival of the Virgin was celebrated with great pomp, in a procession, according to custom. I took my station at the window, in order to see it pass; and went up to the second floor to avoid being observed.

Yet I could not escape the penetrating glances of the Prefect. He looked up; our eyes met; and I thought I could read in his countenance, reproaches and displeasure.

My father sent a message, the day after, by M. Lautard, to say that this

gentleman would at eight o'clock, conduct me to the Procurator General; I promised compliance. A moment after, aninvitation came from the Prefect, for the same hour. I then wrote the following letter, in which I alluded to my intended visit to the Procurator General. I had not the smallest suspicion that the last was intended to be kept a secret.

"Sir;

"I am extremely sorry that I cannot avail myself of your invitation, much as I wished it. Several times, in the course of the day, I had determined to write, and solicit a few minutes audience; but the recollection of the strong displeasure you manifested the day before yesterday, prevented me. I am obliged to visit this evening, at eight, a gentleman, whose name I have forgotten. I believe he lodges with M. Mainier. To-morrow, at one

o'clock, if it be convenient, I propose to myself the honour of seeing you; no doubt for the last time: to-morrow is the eve of the terrible day!

"My letter, you say, has affected you. Gracious Heaven! there are then left some hearts of sensibility, and I am not abandoned by the whole world! Oh! if there be only one who interests himself in my fate, I could yet value life. How much have I been deceived! All the world, yes, all the world conspires to deceive me, and can yet expect to find in me candour and simplicity! Pardon me, Sir; I lose myself; my heart is diseased. I passed a dreadful morning. I will tell you every thing. Yes, I will tell you all. You will feel for me, I am certain. The more I reflect on my case, the less I comprehend it. I have not studied Machiavel; this is, beyond all doubt, true.

Accept, &c.

"E. Manson."

M. Juin de Siran is a Knight of St. Louis. He received me with all imaginable politeness, and observed, he had heard M. Lairolle speaking in commendation of me. The sweet tones of my voice, he said, were well known in Montpellier; he ended by adverting to the terrible affair, which leaves me, certainly, no particular wish to exercise my talents in singing. He put a variety of questions; and employed a number of arguments to prove I had been at Bancal's, and convince me of the propriety of confessing it. I assured him nothing would have force any longer to persuade me to persist in an untruth. He then left me, after having first desired me not to mention the interview; but to no purpose, as I had already communicated the circumstance to the Prefect, and was followedi n the streets whenever I went out, by the Commissary of Police.

The following day my father intimated his pleasure to see me. I went, accompanied by my little idol. I found Victoire melted into tears. He asked me if I were still bent on denying every thing? I replied in the affirmative. He then alluded to the confidential communication I had made to Victoire. I assured him that I had only related, in compliance with repeated solicitations, the terms of my deposition at the Prefecture, which were no secret. "But," rejoined my father, "do you mean to adhere to that deposition?" I answered "No! I will sooner consent to lose my own life, and that of my son also." Upon this he abandoned himself to the wildest transports of fury; and advancing towards me, offered to strike me, when Victoire came to my assistance.

You ought to have seen little Edward: he screamed aloud, and would have

beat his grandfather, if I had not prevented him. He told me afterwards he would never see grandpapa again, as he was naughty to mama Clarissa.

My father's resentment knew no bounds: it continued with increasing violence; when, *in order to pacify him, I conceded the point once more, and promised to comply with his wishes to the fullest extent.* He bid me observe that he was going to the Procurator General, to acquaint him of my intention, and cautioned me, as I valued myself, to be upon my guard.

I replied by begging him to be calm; and departing with all the expedition possible, left Victoire more dead than alive.

In the evening I had half an inclination to see the President, and without communicating my purpose to any one, I went to the hotel where he lodged. It was five o'clock. A maid servant

told me that her master was gone out to dinner, and that besides he did not wish to be at home to any person. I assured her I was not at all related to the parties involved in the guilt of the assassination. "La!" said the girl, "perhaps you are Madam Manson?"—"Precisely so."—"If that be the case, my master will receive you, I am convinced of it."—"How can you be sure of it: I have not mentioned a syllable to any one of my intention to come here; indeed I did not know it myself an hour ago."—"Never mind," replied the servant, "I know the President will be glad to see you: I have heard something of it." I requested her to fetch me at eight o'clock. She came and ushered me into an apartment, fitted up with great elegance, where I saw a woman who waited on M. Grenier, and who entertained me with little else but remarks on the state of the weather.

At this moment the President was announced. I rose, and saw, to my great confusion, the Prefect entering with him. He was visibly agitated, and seemed to be impressed with the idea that I meant to make discoveries: Actuated by this supposition, he assured me that the President deserved, at all events, my entire confidence, and that he would leave us to ourselves. I replied, with much quickness, that I had nothing to communicate which might not be heard equally by himself, and intreated him to remain; but he left the room, repeating, that all he had said was with a view to my interest, and that he could not imagine in what manner I should extricate myself from the difficulties into which I had been betrayed. I was now alone with the President. He treated me at first with great severity; and affecting to believe I intended to resist the order to appear

before the Court, said he would employ force to compel me. I disclaimed any such intention; and said I knew the obedience I owed to the law. He mentioned my father, whom I drove to despair. I could now account for his severity, yet I defended myself to the best of my power. The President, as I proceeded, softened a little the tone of his voice, and surveyed me with less austerity of countenance.

Three other magistrates were announced. I rose to depart, when he asked me if I had any objection to see these gentlemen? I replied, "Not any," and resumed my seat. The President then communicated all I had said. He spoke of the persecutions I had endured, and concluded by saying, "The lady is in a state of such irritation, that she will oblige M. Clémendot, with a pistol at his head, to speak truth; and shoot him, if he refuse." I had

made use of these expressions, and now confirmed them. My language was enforced with a degree of energy that astonished them, and with a consciousness of innocence, such as at length carried conviction. I maintained that I was in a state of mental derangement when I made the deposition at the Prefecture, but that the sight even of the scaffold should not prevail upon me to disappoint the expectations of justice. The President desired me to compose myself; and remarked, that evidence accompanied by such expressions, could not be received; but that the Procurator General and the civil party, would have to decide on this point.

He seemed to take compassion on me; and after a conference of two hours duration, I withdrew. Thus terminated my first interview with the President.

On the following day, the 18th, I

repaired to the tribunal, but remained in the room where the witnesses assembled. The jury were impannelled, and the bills of indictment read. I passed the day very wretchedly. A number of persons collected round me, and assailed me by importunities: "Tell the truth; what is there to fear; can you advocate the cause of these ruffians? They are odious to the whole world. You are the only one willing to support them."

I was distracted. The common people gazed upon me with contempt. Persons of respectability turned away their eyes to avoid seeing me. A few, perhaps, regarded me with an expression of pity.

Such was the condition of your unhappy daughter while she remained in the room, the first time of her appearance there. Madame Castel addressed me in these terms: "Cousin,

take care of yourself! You maintain you were not at Bancal's on the 19th March. It is a lie! There is a witness who will swear, that on the 20th of that month, Madelaine Bancal brought a bonnet to be made, which a lady had left her: it turns out to be of the same stuff with one of your gowns."—"It is very possible," I observed: "when I order a gown, I don't buy the whole piece: other people may have a fancy for the same pattern as well as myself." This lady, for a space of two hours, exerted all her ingenuity to prove that I ought to confess I had been in a house of bad character; pretending that I was not the less an honest woman on that account! I heard her without paying the slightest attention.

At last, about five o'clock, we were dismissed. It was high time: we came at ten. I waited till the crowd dispersed. Madame Castel made an offer to accom-

pany me home, which I accepted. But she kept me back for a moment, in order to see the accused passing.

I was not acquainted with the person of Bastide, and could not distinguish the features of his countenance, as he walked very fast. Not so Jausion: he moved slowly on, and threw around his eyes in search of mine. He at length caught them, and darted a glance so expressive, that I had no doubt he had something to communicate; but had not the talent to conjecture what.

The next day the witnesses were called over. I had never in my life entered the hall of the tribunal; and was so much confused, that I saw only two gentlemen, who smiled complacently, as soon as they perceived me. Judge of my emotions, my dear mother, when, as I advanced, they saluted me; and I recognised Bastide and Jausion!

I never suffered so acutely. This

mark of attention, I felt, could not fail of being observed; all eyes were upon me. This behaviour on the part of the accused, injured their cause as well as mine. I held my summons in my hand; people have since told me I bit it; I believe so; I was choaked with indignation; the blood rushed violently into my head, and if I had not instantly retired, it would have brought on an apoplectic fit..

Madame Castel did not fail to countenance a belief that the prisoners had taken off their hats to me, and that every one knew it. Ah, my God! I knew it too. We came back into the hall of the witnesses, waiting to be summoned in our turn; but though my chances were very remote, I expected every moment to be called. All appeared equally impatient to see me. "I was," they said, "so interesting a witness!" and I knew nothing!

M. Clémendot passed near me. He wore an air of such provoking insolence, that I was inspired anew, and very ardently with the desire of shooting him in court, in the presence of the jury and the public. The very sight of him had such an effect upon me, that the blood gushed from both nostrils at once. I forgot to state my brother Edward's intention of calling him out. Of this I received intelligence, as well as of the precautions taken by the Generals to prevent the duel. I wrote a long letter to the *Prévôt* to acquaint him with my fears. He had the condescension to visit and sooth me, by declaring that my brother had passed his word of honour not to come to Rodez during the investigation.

But I considered that Edward, who had not fought for some time, would be glad to avail himself of so favourable an

opportunity. If he were successful, I knew a criminal process might be instituted against him, and he would be obliged to conceal himself: if vanquished, my condition must of necessity become more insupportable than it is. In consequence of this, I said, M. Clémendot is beneath my brother's notice; *he shall die by the hand of a woman.* I shall lose my own life, but I may read a lesson to false witnesses. What I do will be attested by eye-witnesses, and there will be no difficulty in passing judgment.

These are the thoughts which occupied me that day. I no longer paid attention to any thing, but was engaged solely in considering the means by which I might procure a loaded pistol. To go to a gunmaker would be suspicious, and I wanted powder, and ball. I knew nothing of the method of using

them. I was in a kind of delirium, and slept not a moment during the night.

I rose early, and seeing Madame Pons' milliner passing through the street, I desired her to go to that lady, and ask, in my name, for a loaded pistol, (believing that her husband or nephew were in possession of one); begging her to be assured I would not fire it off; that no person should know who had supplied me with it; and that I expected, from her friendship, compliance with my request as soon as possible.

This lady had more good sense than myself; she absolutely refused; but I was not the less sanguine on that account. It was at this time, that bidding adieu to common sense, I wrote to the Prefect a letter, of which the following is a copy, where I told him *he should*

soon have occasion to solicit in my behalf, letters of pardon : *

" Sir;

" If I could have doubted a single moment of your kindness, your behaviour to me yesterday, at the President's, which I can never forget, would have afforded me a convincing proof of it. I have witnessed your sensibility, and the lively interest you have taken in my fate, and that of my father; could you seriously imagine I would make discoveries to other people, and refuse them to you, who alone have a title to my

* These words of Madame Manson for a long time remained without explanation. She meditated a signal act of revenge, which must have conducted her in the end to the scaffold. This is the secret of her having solicited before hand letters of pardon; and has contributed, in no slight degree, to lead people to imagine she took an active part in the crime already made public.

confidence. You wished me to give up my secret? I consent; it will soon be made public; you will soon, perhaps, have occasion to solicit for me the king's pardon. I promise you the full explanation of certain passages in my letters, which have been found obscure. You shall be made thoroughly acquainted with my temper, which no one comprehends, and which I have taken but little pains to make intelligible; for if the world pass judgment on me, I pass sentence on it. I passed the evening with the President, with M. de Plantade, and another judge. I told them nothing: a single word escaped me in a moment of anger, which appeared to strike the President. I stopped short: they said I need not appear in court today; but as I am subpœnaed, I must be present at nine o'clock, when the witnesses are called over. I will do myself the honour of seeing you, when-

ever you are at leisure. Do not despise me, Sir; I hope I am not deserving of contempt. I beg you will keep this secret till it be in my power to explain myself more fully. Promise me not to show my letter. You do not believe me. I swear I mean to tell you the truth. What a dreadful night! How heavily the hours drag on to the unhappy, who count them! yet my child sleeps near me in peace! I am condemned to lose him: I perceive it, and cannot avoid it.

"Be pleased to accept, &c."

At last, I went to the tribunal, and while I sat in a melancholy mood alone, in a corner of the room, Amans, who during the first examination had affected to pass and repass without speaking, made a signal to me to advance. I followed him to the great terrace, where we could walk without interruption. He began by saying he pitied me.

"Well," replied I, "you feel then some little interest in my fate? I thought you had forgotten me, and that my person even did not recal me to your recollection!" I censured his deposition, and asked him where he had collected the materials for it? He assured me he had never asserted my having been present at Bancal's upon any authority I gave him. "I believe it," rejoined I, "otherwise the Cleobulus of the department would deserve a cell in the lunatic asylum." He then said his evidence was not important; that it was given reluctantly, and at the instigation of M. Lavergne. I begged him to acquaint me with the tenor of his deposition. He said he had sworn to a question I once put to him, to this effect: "If you had been present at the assassination, how would you have acted?"—"Well," said I, "is this a confirmation of my presence? My mother and other per-

sons have frequently deliberated on the line of conduct they would have pursued under similar circumstances. One said I would have defended the unhappy man; another, I would have cried out murder; a third, I should have died of terror. Is it to be inferred, that the people who used those exclamations were really present at Bancal's house?" He afterwards alluded to Bousquier's evidence, which I have already adverted to.

Your nephew appears to be convinced that I was present on the occasion, and owed my life to Jausion. He employed a number of arguments on this subject, which you have seen in the report of the trial, as well as his definition of an *oath*; but all this was of very little use, since none of his supposed cases had the slightest application to me. When I left Amans, the five young gentlemen to whom M. Clé-

mendot had spoken in the coffee-house, came forward.

They gave a positive assurance of their having deposed nothing that could offend me; and declared they would interpose, and prevent Clémendot from making use of unauthorized language. A thousand reasons might have brought me, they said, to Bancal's house; laundresses lived there, and no one imagined I had made an assignation. I had only to speak, and stop the mouths of those monsters, in order to be borne about in triumph through the town.

Ginisti made this remark: He remembered the national festivals, where a woman, drawn in a car, represented Truth. In reply I merely observed, that my object was solely to speak agreeably to the dictates of conscience; but that, to explain myself more intelligibly, I wanted the protection of a loaded pistol. One of them promised to bring

it; but I did not go to ask for it. The day after, these fits of passion subsided. Religion and good sense re-assumed their sway; but the latter was of short continuance.

I repaired again to the President, and mentioned the presumption of the prisoners in bowing to me. It made me despair. The world believed me to entertain a partiality in favour of Jausion, under the idea he had saved my life. "You say you know nothing of the prisoners?"—"Nothing, Sir; I declare solemnly, nothing at all."—"Then keep up your spirits, and don't despair."—I wept, and wrung my hands. He told me I might tax Jausion with his presumption in bowing to me; and, through the medium of himself, put such questions to him as I judged proper.

M. Grénier, my dear mamma, is of an excellent disposition; throughout the whole affair he has displayed the

greatest impartiality. His character has not been fairly appreciated; no one has decided so ably. In leaving him, I went to the Prefect, in order to get back the letter I had the folly to send. He was unwilling to part with it, and demanded an explanation of it; I yielded to his entreaties, and at length said, "Well, I intended to kill M. Clémendot, that I might spare my brother Edward the trouble—that was all."

If you know M. D'Estourmel, you will conceive with what kind of look he listened to me. He treated all I said with derision; and kept the letter, which has been read by all France, and which no one pretends to understand.

The Prefect led me into his study, where I found Victoire, who appeared to have been put to the question. In spite of my sorrows, I could with difficulty help laughing. She wished to speak in set phrases, but the fear with

which she was inspired no doubt by the elevated rank of her opponent, betrayed her into a number of expressions so truly ridiculous, that the bare recollection of what passed on this occasion, makes me laugh, even at this moment in my prison, where I have already been two months, and where I do not feel inclined to laugh often.

Victoire had seen Gustavus, the day of the violent altercation at my father's. She told him it was incredible I should deny having been at Bancal's, as I had deposed to the truth of the fact at the Prefecture; and on my return, had repeated it to her. Gustavus instantly carried this to my father; and then followed the scene already described, and its consequences. My father related it in turn to the Prefect, who thought nothing more indispensable than sending immediately for Victoire

Redoulès; and thus it happens, that one may become an important witness in a criminal cause, without ever suspecting it.

Let no one say: Fountain, I will not drink of thy streams. Who could have predicted, six months ago, that I should quench my thirst so frequently at that of the Capuchins?

I engaged Victoire to go; and when I was alone with the Prefect, urged him again to give up the letter; he would not consent. I then took leave; and as I retired, said "When I come before the tribunal, Jausion's face will lengthen. He had rather I were the woman shut up at Bancal's; but I shall find her out perhaps."

I passed again the whole day in the witnesses' room. I had seen M. Blanc des Bourines with Charles Colrat. The latter was summoned also, as hav-

ing made an appointment with me at Bancal's; but the poor young man was not at Rodez on the 19th March.

M. Blanc walked about the room with Charles. I thought he had found means to introduce himself as one of the curious.

One afternoon he sat down near me, and said, "Good God, Madam, how much I pity you! how will you extricate yourself?"—"I can't tell," I replied, "but I shall not utter falsehoods in the presence of the Court."

I forgot to mention that Amans, during our conversation the day before, had told me, that for some time a report had been spread at La Montagne,* of the names of Manson and Enjalran being implicated in the affair of Fualdès. "You bear the two names," said he, "and thus we have the clue of Ariadne;

* Part of the province formerly called Le Rouergue.

but this clue, so far from assisting them to escape the labyrinth, has served only to perplex still more those who followed it; and Madame Manson, whose maiden name is Enjalran, is not the daughter of Minos." I asked M. Blanc, who often goes to La Montagne, whether he had heard my cousin's report? He told me he knew, two months before, the story Clémendot had invented.

He inclined towards me, and whispered, "Madame Pons reckons confidently upon you." I assured him that this lady was under no obligation to me, and that I would speak the truth, as I had promised her.

M. Blanc appeared a good deal embarrassed, and after a conversation of two hours, left me.

About nine in the evening, I learned something very extraordinary and important, but did not dare to reveal it to any one. The son of the deceased

M. Fualdès, was the only person to whom I could safely have intrusted it. I had seen this unhappy young man on the day of the procession, as I stood at my window: he passed along the street; my heart told me it was he: he darted a contemptuous frown upon me. How little he read my thoughts! He believed I was suborned by the assassins of his father!

I wrote to this gentleman, to say that I had something of importance to communicate, and carried the letter myself, at five in the morning of that day, so fatal to the prisoners, since the jury brought in their verdict "Guilty." A servant received it; I begged it might be safely delivered.

Impatient of hearing it asserted that M. Enjalran interested himself in behalf of the accused, and restrained, by his menaces, the testimony of his daughter, I wrote that celebrated letter,

of which so much has been said, convinced that it would be read on the trial, and justify the conduct of my father in the eyes of the public.

To M. Enjalran.

"I intreat my dear father to be calm. He shall be satisfied, if it be really true that he takes no interest in the fate of the accused. As to me, I have positive proof that he takes none; yet after all that has occurred, I grow suspicious. I am resolved to strike a great blow; the whole tribunal will be astonished. I will state the whole truth. The unhappy delinquents must perish, and such as * * *. Burn my letter; if the guilty should obtain information of it, all would be lost. Their counsel would take their measures. Yesterday every thing contributed to afford me light; no one suspects it. Heaven grant that the first

President do not intimidate me! If the blood mount into my head, as it did yesterday, when the witnesses were called over, I shall not be able to speak a word. I shall require all my presence of mind, and ought therefore to be informed previously of the moment when my appearance in court is necessary.

"You have pursued me with a parent's malediction. You wish me dead. You refuse me sustenance. I am on the point of losing the only friend I had; for Madame Pons, who would have divided her bread with me, will now desert me. It is of no consequence: you are my father. I, your daughter, will make every sacrifice, and never withdraw from you my affection and respect.—Be cautious of this letter."

Leaving M. Fualdès, I called at my father's house. He was still in bed, but could not sleep. He deliberated

on this extraordinary letter, of which he demanded the explanation the instant he saw me. I told him he should know it *hereafter*. He declared he would carry it to the President, to which I merely observed he was master of it, and might act as he pleased. At length he pressed me urgently to know what I really intended to say in court; and received for answer, "The truth, and nothing but the truth." He threw himself into a violent passion, and I escaped without his being able to prevent me.

On my return home, I found the servant of the Prefect, who desired me, in his master's name, to wait upon him immediately. I was surprised; but infinitely more, when I found young Fualdès with him in the study. He asked me if I wished to be alone with this gentleman, and on my replying in the affirmative, left us.

The presence of this unhappy youth filled me with emotions of the most painful nature. I knew the prepossessions he entertained, and his belief that my silence had been secured by a bribe.

He began by asking me what I had to communicate? I recommended him to instruct his counsel so to conduct the prosecution as to afford no grounds of appeal. He seemed to pay little attention to this advice. How little did I suspect, that he, to whom I gave it, should make me desirous of the appeal myself.

He wished to obtain from me a concession of my having been present at Bancal's during the murder, and of my knowledge of the assassins. He said I might perhaps find myself opposed to a witness who would astonish me. I asked him if there really were any one to depose that I had been at the place alluded to, on the 19th March?

He answered it was the key to every thing. "Well," said I, "give me this key: why do you hesitate? I am more disposed to favor you than you imagine." M. Fauldès then, with candor and openness of manner that touched me sensibly, replied, "No, Madam; there is no witness who proves you were present at the murder; but I am perfectly convinced of it, and assured that you know every thing." He spoke of my connexion with Madame Pons. I assured him this would not be a means of inducing me to resist the claims of justice.

Some one no doubt had mentioned the passionate affection I bore to my son: he expatiated on this subject; and perceiving the effect it had upon me, he made me conceive the lot I was preparing for him. M. Fualdès has in his language something energetic: he speaks better than he writes.

Sensible of the impression he had produced, he stopped me, when I was on the point of retiring, and said "Madam, I entreat you, take pity on a child who claims vengeance for the murder of his father! You know the assassins, and will not confess it. One of them has saved your life, but is he, on that account, the less a criminal? Jausion will be condemned to the Gallies; but this is not enough: he will lose his head. He better deserves punishment than Bastide. He is the author of the plot. I think I see him now plunging the fatal knife!" I felt a secret horror the moment the monster presented himself to view, after a frightful deed that deprives me of the best of fathers." I stood aghast.—"You believe them guilty," I repeated; "are you quite sure of that?"—"Ah! Madam, you alone seem to entertain

doubts; you alone wish to protect them; but no! I deceive myself! An authority which you feel powerfully, and revere, interposes itself to silence you . . . . You comprehend me."

A death-like shuddering overpowered me. I saw my suspicions were founded. My mind was disordered. I felt as though I had lost my senses, and said, "You believe them guilty! Well! let them perish: you shall be revenged!"

I have little recollection of all the remarks he made in a conversation that lasted two hours. The Prefect I know came into the room about ten, accompanied by the President, to ask whether I chose to be examined that day. I objected, at first, as not being in a fit condition; but M. Fualdès, who saw in me the temper he wished to encourage, insisted upon it so strongly, and was seconded so energetically by the two

magistrates, that at length I acquiesced; and consented to appear before the tribunal at two o'clock.

I remained a few moments longer with M. Fualdès, and must do him the justice to say he asked me only for the truth. When I quitted the hotel of the Prefect, my countenance exhibited visibly marks of such derangement, that people who met me in the way, must have been alarmed. A woman, on seeing me pass, said to a soldier, "Why don't you strike the wench with the butt end of your musket? Perhaps she would speak then!"

Such, my dear mother, was the language used in my presence! On reaching home, I took two cups of coffee, which nearly killed me. I had not slept for many nights. My blood was in a high state of fermentation. I dressed. The President had advised me to adopt the remarkable costume I wore when

he saw me first. I followed his advice, and put on a black gown, with a white muslin collar round the neck; a black bonnet and black veil. This detestable veil has induced some of the accused to believe me to be the lady concealed in the little room; but I was not as wise then as now. I went to the tribunal, and sat down in the witnesses' apartment, in a state that merited compassion. Want of sleep, grief, the conference in the morning, and the coffee I had drunk, shook my nerves to such a degree, that I trembled, and could not support myself. The bare recollection makes me tremble even now; and I can with difficulty hold my pen. Good God! what will become of me at Albi, before the Court of Toulouse?

You know, my dear mother, how little is necessary to alarm me: a cry of "fire!" has thrown me into fits. Since you know and can appreciate

what preceded the sitting of the 22nd August, you will be the less surprised at what followed.

At two an officer summoned me; I obeyed. My situation could be envied only by him who is conducted to the place of execution. I must have looked as pale.

I will not describe what I felt when I saw myself in the witnesses' box. On the one hand, the imposing solemnity of justice: the awful consequences of it exhibited by the accused: *my full conviction of their guilt*: the wild air which characterised some of their countenances: the profound silence that reigned over the immense hall: the attentive curiosity of the public, who filled it, and who expected the developement of some great mystery: my knowledge of the suspicions entertained of my father: the sight of the unhappy son of him whose fate was now to be avenged: and, lastly, the image of the

saviour, which stood in front and reminded me of my duty ;—all these objects united, all these tumultuous ideas assailing the mind, overpowered me, and I fainted.

But in recovering the use of my senses, I did not recover my reason. I recollect only one idea that pursued me incessantly,—I fancied I saw a knife streaming with blood suspended over my head, or plunged into the bosom of my child.

You know the rest, my dear mother. You have read the printed account of the trial; every time I peruse the details of the fatal sitting of the 22nd August, I ask myself " Are you the person who said all this. Is it possible that you could fall into the commission of such extravagancies ?"

On leaving the court, I was conducted by Amans and M. de la Gondalie: we went to Madame d'Ornes: I found

Eliza there, who advanced to meet me, looking very sullen, and as if afraid to embrace me. "Oh!" said I to her, "if you will not embrace me, let it alone; you will be a greater loser than I." I do not recollect whether she embraced me; I know she proposed a private conferences when she undertook to oblige me to confess having been present at Bancal's. "You must be very clever," said I to her. "But I can almost prove it."—"Indeed! You are always ready to prove things which are not in existence.—You have been so frequently deceived, that you ought to change your suspicious mind." I followed her nevertheless into a room, where she treated me with an absurd story that struck me so little, I have forgotten it.

I had then a long conversation with Amans, and brought him almost to believe I had not been present at the

murder. After talking with Madame d'Ornes three hours, I returned to my own room, where I found the General, with several officers of the Legion of the Var: they formed a guard for my safety, as they said; but I thought, and think so still, that it was intended to defend me from certain emissaries and carriers of letters. These gentlemen staid with me some time: an officer told me that Jausion, on being led back to prison, had said, "I am a lost man; this woman has destroyed me." Another stated, that M. Romiguière would abandon the cause of Bastide, if I added another word. I! who always considered myself as having said nothing, because I could recollect nothing!

M. Belcastel now came into the room, took a chair near me, and said, "Clarissa! for I yet am anxious to call you by this name,—listen to the advice of a friend; why will you persist obstinately

in withholding the truth? There is no crime in having been at Bancal's. I assure you there is not a lady in the town who would feel ashamed of your society, if you would render to justice the debt due to it. Speak, only speak, and you shall have the protection of my arm in public; an offer which I cannot make if you persist in being silent. I have only to add, that my brother, the Marquis de Bournazel, has called here this evening, to obtain from you the developement of this dreadful mystery."

These gentlemen, no doubt, did me much honour; but whatever value I might annex to their patronage, I could not act in defiance of conscience. Victoire, who saw three guards stationed over me, and yet thought me feebly defended, came to sleep with me: we neither of us closed our eyes.

I was to be examined again the next

day. General Viala came to conduct me, but as I was not dressed, he left an officer of the Legion behind, who waited for me, and gave me his arm.

The sitting of the 23rd was very tempestuous. The pity I had inspired the day before, was succeeded by the most profound contempt. Women that were dissolved in tears on Friday, would have spit in my face on Saturday. The prisoners and their counsel on this occasion recovered a little their drooping spirits. On coming out, M. Flaugergues reconducted me home, and staid with me there. He complimented me with great delicacy. You are acquainted, my dear mamma, with his refinement of manners. He recommended me to select a person in whose honour I could strictly confide, communicate to him my secret, and follow the rule of conduct he prescribed. Such an individual, he said, could not be compelled, in a court of

justice, to discover what had been intrusted to him.

I assured him, with many thanks, that I had no secret, and if I had, I need not go far in search of one who most deserved my confidence. He left me, and again a guard was stationed upon me for the evening.

The next morning Amans entered my room. "You are," said he, "a most extraordinary woman: I have seen a letter of your's to the President. I know not from what source you borrow your ideas; they are truly noble. In speaking of gratitude, you express yourself with an originality worthy of the greatest writers."

"You flatter," I replied. "I believe, however, if more pains had been bestowed on my education, I might have become a little more intelligent than I am."—"Till now," said Amans, "the part you have sustained is very fine;

take care not to spoil it."—"If you still suppose me to have been present at Bancal's," I rejoined, "I cannot conceive in what the beauty of it consists."—"When a woman cannot have the virtues of her sex reflected on her," resumed my cousin, "she must endeavour to possess those belonging to men. This I believe you have done; you are not the less estimable in my eyes."—"Listen to me," said I; "when the truth shall be discovered, as I trust it will, I shall be more interesting than the bad woman in the closet."

He quitted me. I made ready to go before the tribunal. Little Edward wished to accompany me, which I consented to. At twelve o'clock, when the sitting was adjourned, according to custom, and but few persons remained, he said in a low voice, "Mamma, Bastide has very much the look of a man who has killed another." I asked him

if he knew him. "Oh!" said he, "I think I do; he is near a woman dressed in black, and close to a little gentleman; that must be he!" He was perfectly correct.

The next morning Amans came with a look of consternation. "What is the matter?" said I.—"How have you trifled with me! How imposed upon me! I believed you for an instant, and imagined you to be sincere. I raised a superstructure without a foundation. You were not at Bancal's you say? yet I know the very man who had an appointment with you there!"—"Upon my word you are very well informed: you will allow me, I hope, to participate in the pleasure of your discoveries."—"I am not at all disposed to laugh," said my cousin. "I passed a dreadful night. I am nearly as much distracted as when my poor father died in my arms . . . You are a lost woman.

I wish I had never known you. I saw Blanc de Bourines yesterday: I questioned him; his embarrassment and evasive answers convinced me that he knew more than he thought it prudent to reveal. Don't go to plot with him, pray; for I should know it." I begged him not to trouble himself; observing that I did not consider my situation more desperate than it was the evening before; all the world believing me to be the woman concealed in the closet, and that I must submit to be identified with her till the real one comes forth. He then quitted me a little less agitated.

A few days after, I saw M. Flaugergues, who appeared sensibly alive to my situation, and disposed to make every effort to extricate me. I mentioned the bonnet given by a lady as a present to little Madelaine, on the 20th of March. He recommended

me to go to the Hospital in person, in order to examine the stuff of which it was made. "Perhaps," said he, "this may tend to happy discoveries."

I wove the winding-sheet that was to carry me to the grave! I assured this gentleman I would follow his advice; however it had nearly escaped me, when a person, who sat near me at the tribunal, said, "a young lady has been summoned; she, perhaps, may throw some light on the affair."

Another person, the moment after, added, "We shall see a young woman who, according to report, was in Bancal's house; her lover has confessed it: it should seem that coming too late to keep the appointment, he found the door shut." You may conceive, my dear mother, the effect of such declaration upon me. I was on the point of throwing myself upon my knees, and exclaiming, "Oh, God! thou hast at

length had compassion upon me!" I then put some questions to the person who first addressed me. She replied, that the name of Mad[selle] Rose Pierret had just been mentioned to the President, as one deeply acquainted with the whole affair. In an instant, all our conversations on this subject rushed into my mind. I recollected Madame Constans told me that Rose, who had left the town, meant to continue in the country all the time the trial lasted.

I passed several days in profound thought. The appearance of Rose at the tribunal was expected with great impatience; every day announced it, but she never came. I heard she had been ill ever since I was summoned, and had fainted on hearing the report of the words "Nobody will take pity on me," which I used on the 22nd of August. All this confirmed me still more in the idea, that Rose was the

lady secreted in the closet; but other things were yet to be expected. I recollected the advice given by M. Flaugergues, and did not hesitate to follow it. I begged Madame Castel to send the milliner, who had made the bonnet for Madelaine Bancal.

She came immediately, and informed me a sleeve had been given her, cut from a spencer of dark taffeta, to make a bonnet of; that all the remnants were taken back, but that if I would come with her to the Hospital, we might perhaps obtain a sight of the bonnet, and that she was sure to know it again.

We went. As the milliner was personally known to Bancal's little child, she presented herself first: I remained at the door. She came to tell me the moment after, that Madelaine had sent back the bonnet to her mother, who had returned instead of it a black one, on account of the mourning for her

father. I desired to see the child: she came; I looked steadily at her, and said, "I come from the tribunal; your mother has confessed every thing; her life will be saved: as to you, who refuse to speak, they will send soldiers to fetch you: I have begged them to spare you, hoping I might prevail upon you to tell the truth."—Madelaine surveyed me attentively; my manner made an impression upon her. I asked whether M. Fualdès had not been killed in her father's house? She replied, "Yes!" And related the circumstances already before the public. I inquired if any lady had been in the house when the murder was committed. I promised her a present of a crown, if she would tell me who it was.—She said the lady wore a veil. I drew aside mine, and said, "Look at me, am I the lady?" The girl answered, she had not seen her face, because the veil was very

thick, came down to her knees, and was black. Observe, my dear mother, this conversation took place in the presence of the milliner, who never left us.

With what candour I acted! And yet this proved my ruin! Some policy is necessary to be exerted in the present age, in order to be successful.

Since the affair of the black veil, which I thought I fully comprehended, I had no desire to hear any thing more. I took Madelaine by the hand, in order to conduct her to the Prefecture, but the Syndic opposed it. I waited on the Prefect; he rose from his table to speak to me, with a napkin in his hand, and his mouth full. He was at dinner: I related my discoveries: he begged I would go with him a second time to the Hospital, that very instant. I did not wait for him long; he returned, accompanied by two gentlemen, one of whom,

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SA...

I have since been informed, was Sub-Prefect of Espalion, the other M. Bonald de Milhaut, junior. These gentlemen interrogated the little girl about the lady in the closet. She told nearly the same story which M. Clémendot related, in the night of the 27th July. The Prefect asked Madelaine, if the lady were of the same height as myself, begging me to stand up. The girl said, she was not quite so tall as I, and *much fatter*.

It was now almost night. Little Edward claimed my care. I begged the Prefect would allow me to retire, but he pressed me to remain some moments longer; and said, he would acquaint the President with the circumstance. I then staid along with the two other gentlemen, and with Madelaine, who having begun the chapter of Revelations, knew not where to stop. The Prefect now returned with four gen-

tlemen, whose countenances I could not distinguish, for it was night. I thought, however, I distinguished the voice of M. Plantade. I took my leave, and the Sub-Prefect gave me his arm, to conduct me to my lodgings.

It is inconceivable that I should talk to him from the Hospital, as far as the rue du Touat, and not recognise his person afterwards at the tribunal, where I saw him several days successively in the front of me, engaged in sketching my portrait. He came even and spoke to me, on the sitting of the 8th September. I always inquired the name of the tall person who had accompanied me on my return home; and first learned, in prison, to whom I was indebted for this act of politeness.

I now thanked God for having preserved me from shipwreck. I thought

the tempest calmed, when it yet hung in the air, and the lightnings were pointed against me. I addressed a fervent prayer to Heaven, and retired to rest. I was impatient for the return of the following day, in the hope of obtaining a complete refutation of calumny. I addressed a letter to Amans, which he said was incomprehensible; and for that reason, no doubt, he paid me in the same coin, by an answer as little intelligible as Algebra, or an enigmatical inscription.

I came back to Rodez at an early hour, and repaired to the tribunal, always with the hope of seeing there Mad[selle] Rose Pierret; but was again disappointed. On the evening of that day I wrote to her, and had my letter carried by my landlady, who reported the effect it had produced upon her. She wept, was scarcely able to speak,

or support herself; and at last said, she did not know what Madame Manson meant.

Yet my letter was couched in very simple terms. I begged if she knew any thing in regard to the murder of M. Fualdès, to reveal it; and extricate me from the dreadful situation in which I stood. I received no answer.

By a kind of destiny which persecutes me without end, and a fatality not to be resisted, I found myself seated in court near an advocate, who came from Albi; a zealous friend, and warm admirer of M. Romiguière. He had taken the journey with the sole object of witnessing his success, in the great cause where he was retained as counsel. This young gentleman addressed me several times in the most flattering manner, and said an abundance of fine things. I thought at first he was the person who had offered me his arm to escort me from

the Hospital home. He suffered me to believe it, and I should have thought so to this very moment, if he had not convinced me of the mistake. He availed himself of an opening afforded him by a letter, with which he was intrusted to one of my brothers, to call and pay me a visit: sometimes he accompanied me to my lodgings. He repaired to the tribunal at an early hour, to make sure of a place close to my chair, which was guarded by a soldier, and near the officers of the Legion. I was the only witness indulged with a chair: the others sat upon benches. I do not know why this privilege was conceded to me alone, for they were very much dissatisfied with my conduct.

This young advocate always spoke up aloud to me, and showed without scruple the interest he took in the fate of the accused. He expressed himself very unceremoniously on this point, asserting that

every where else but at Rodez they must be acquitted. He was far from being aware of the consequence of his remarks. I said to him, "Be cautious; they will stone you to death; keep your opinions to yourself; besides, you injure me in the opinion of the public." In truth my steps and observations were watched.

What I feared, happened. Hints were thrown out that this very person was an emissary of M. Romiguière, and people were more strongly convinced than ever of an understanding between myself and the prisoners. In consequence of this, M. Rous, commonly called *the rich merchant* of Paris, who had frequently placed himself near me, and heard every syllable that dropped from the barrister, spoke to him in plain terms, and threatened to represent his conduct to the Court. The day following the Chef d'Escadron of

Gendarmery, without using any ceremony, ordered him to change his seat, and leave the lady (speaking of me) to herself; remarking, that she knew her own business; and that if he continued this sort of conversation, he would put him under an arrest. The barrister did not fight: he petitioned!

You remember, my dear mother, you wrote, requesting me, if I had no certain knowledge of the murder, to demand an audience in order to remove the impression made by my conduct in the sitting of the 22nd August, and prevent a *judicial assassination*. I obeyed, and addressed a letter to the President, who had called me before the council, communicating my fears. He replied very shortly, saying, that the Court would not refuse to hear me before the close of the debates. I thought he had rather an air of displeasure.

You are acquainted with my having been called on the 8th September, and the vexation and disgrace I had to encounter in my inquiries after truth. Rose denied all knowledge of me antecedently to the month of July; denied even she had ever spoken to me of Fualdès; but not with impunity. She faltered; and left many people convinced of her having been guilty of a flagrant breach of truth.

Madame Constans appeared, and played a most ridiculous part. She stated that her husband had a dream, in which he heard me confess that I was at Bancal's; and this woman, that she might fully justify her husband's suspicions, affected to sob piteously; asserted and then contradicted herself; and convinced, beyond all doubt, the Court, the Jury, and the Public.

Two days after, Amans sent to request I would go to Olemps. Edward had

arrived, and was to communicate to me a paper of much importance. It was your celebrated interrogatory, to which I replied in a way, I trust, that afforded you satisfaction. My brother assumed an air by no means usual with him; and as all persons putting on extraordinary appearances, are believed to be thoroughly conversant in the whole affair, he no doubt was perfectly at home on the subject of the murder. He swore, notwithstanding, to the fact of his utter ignorance. Madame Rodat observed a distant and forbidding manner. As to Eliza, she had already given me a sufficient specimen of *hauteur*. It is not exactly my custom to advance towards persons who retreat. I left my cousin, and conversed with her brothers and my own.

Your god-daughter, I am told, is on the point of being married. I hope her husband will never enter Bancal's

house! Eliza remarked one day, in the course of conversation, that her affection for me was unalterable, and that I did not return it in an equal degree. "If," said I, "I were dead and you thought me only decently buried, you would soon console yourself: it is not the case with me; but every one according to his fancy. For instance, should any one tell me, that a lady whom I loved, had been seen in a disreputable house, I would not at once give credit to the story; I should require stronger evidence, and would refuse to employ menaces and severity to bring her to a confession of the truth, particularly if she had solemnly asserted the falsehood of the charge." I learned, through the medium of Amans, what Madelaine, Bancal's daughter had said. He again began to entertain doubts whether I had been at her father's on the 19th, and told me

he would attend the sitting of the Court the following morning.

Edward appeared to be concerned at what took place on the 22nd of August. After I had assured him I knew nothing, I remarked, without entering into all the details, that I had not on that occasion been mistress of myself.

I repeat it again, Justice may punish me, but she will not be able to make me repent of my conduct. What I did I thought I could not avoid doing. Heaven will not call me to account for this falsehood!

The President treated me so ill that I had not the power of saying any thing in the way of exculpation. My letter to my father, as well as the one he wrote to the President, were now read, and produced an effect directly the reverse of what I had expected. At last, in despair of being listened to,

provoked the Procurator-General, and induced him to form his conclusions against me.

I had written to M. Fualdès, to say that in order to arrive at the truth he should arrest me; and then perhaps the wretched woman concealed in the closet would come forward either to save the life of the innocent, or consign the guilty to destruction.

I argued from my own feelings. I had also another object in view. In the event of my not succeeding in the discovery of truth, I hoped at least to be able to stop the proceedings, and avoid the reproach of having doomed to perish persons of whose innocence or guilt I was alike ignorant. The civil party showed more ingenuity than I. The Procurator-General gave me in charge to two gens d'armes; but this lasted only one hour, and whilst I was yet in court.

Sentence of death, however, was at length passed. I saw in imagination the blood streaming from the heads of Bastide and Jausion. I thought I heard the shrieks of their wives, and children! This image pursued me incessantly. I always said to myself, "You alone have caused their condemnation?"

I imagined I saw Jausion looking at me sternly, and exclaiming, "Why do you seek my blood?"

His wife had conjured me, in the most pathetic accents, to have pity on her children, as I was also a mother, and tenderly loved my child.—Oh! place yourself, my dear mother, in my situation, and say how you would have acted?

On the 12th September I made a fresh attempt. I affected to be angry at M. Romiguière, and said significantly, "*All the guilty are not yet in irons,*

and the truth cannot come from my mouth : an expression which brought me to the prison of the Capuchins, but two days too late.

You may well imagine that I did not stay in court to hear sentence of death pronounced. I passed a terrible night. I held little Edward, who looked through the window at the people passing in the street. On a sudden I saw a man advancing with hasty strides, and grasping a large case knife, I thought he was coming to stab me, and leaped to the door and secured it. All the night I fancied myself steeped in blood; the bed appeared to swim in it. I threw myself on the cradle of my child, and thought him dead: the motion awakened me.

The following day my landlady told me " some fatal accident will happen in this house; for the two last nights I have dreamed of nothing but blood.

RAJA SERFOJI'S

My hair stands an end."—"Do not tell me such things," said I to her; "I have the same dreams myself." She observed that her own had been always realised.

On the 14th September—(Oh! pleasing recollection!)—an officer came to acquaint me that he had orders to arrest me. I went with him to the tribunal, where I was interrogated. I then returned home to take my child with me, and was conducted to prison.

I was to occupy the chamber which had been quitted not long before by Mesdames Jausion and Galtier; but the gaoler, who undertook to be responsible, assigned me his own room. I consented to every kind of arrangement: at that moment every thing was indifferent to me. The Prefect paid me a visit in the evening: he reminded me of his having predicted all that happened; that I had lost myself by my own folly. The Mayor entered shortly

after. They took all possible care that I should want nothing, and ordered a room to be provided; but as the keeper's wife seemed desirous I should stay with her, I said I found nothing to complain of, and had every thing I wished. Indeed what could I desire? My son shared my fate.

I passed nearly a fortnight without observing I was in prison. My sufferings were very severe. I had a constant fever, attended with delirium. I uttered piercing cries. One time I imagined the woman Bancal, had poisoned you as well as my son. At another, that I saw Bastide approaching furiously, and accusing me of having been the cause of his condemnation. He said I was in his power, and that he would now revenge himself. Sometimes I fancied I saw the accused on the scaffold. One night we heard a violent rap at the door, and a cry of "*open!*" The

keeper, instead of compliance, hastened to the window. I thought all was over; and took my boy in my arms, resolved to die. At last I heard they had apprehended a felon, and had brought him to prison.

My husband, who has never shown any concern about my child; who had been at Rodez twenty times since I lived there, without inquiring about him; but who knew, from the publicity of the trial, what my anxieties were; now formed the idea of tearing him from me—at a time when he was more precious than ever. I was informed that you wished to see him, and came to the resolution of sending him to you. How delighted was he when told his uncle was come to fetch him. When I embraced him, he saw tears in my eyes, which I tried in vain to conceal: the inestimable little fellow began to cry, and came back into my prison, for-

getting every thing, and anxious only to console his mother. My reason at length gained the ascendancy, and I forced myself from him.

I little imagined his absence would be so long and so painful. When I found myself alone, I discovered, for the first time, that I was a prisoner. The veil was rent; the talisman broken. I have the misfortune to be a fatalist. I persuaded myself that the presence of my son would secure me from all accidents: he at least has the power of making them felt less acutely.

When I heard the doors close behind him, which I had not the power to open again, a death-like coldness overspread me. I fell on the pavement; and do not know how I escaped a fracture of the head.

Persons came to my assistance, and proposed calling my son back, but I

opposed it. I passed a wretched day; followed by many that resembled it.

My husband caused a demand for separation *a mensâ et thoro* to be notified to me, and claimed my son. Overtures of reconciliation had been twice proposed by M. Bertrandi. You know his odious behaviour to this estimable man.

The Prefect seldom passed a week without seeing me in prison. I had also twice the honour of a visit from the Prévôt and Madame Delauro, the Mayoress, who showed me a thousand attentions. She sent me books, and the newspapers.

One day General Despérières brought me a paper containing a letter addressed to M. Dornac du Rosai,—it was subscribed *Pauline Engelrand.* It attributed expressions to me of which I have no longer any recollection; for I read

it only once. I remember merely those words:

My sole desire is to be restored to the friendship of my father. I shall soon be united with my Adela in the mansions of rest . . . . And speaking of the assassins: *they are powerful . . . numerous . . . Oh! the monsters! infamous house—people well know that I never entered there.*

This letter was very long, and has puzzled its readers. I assured the General that it was the performance of any one but myself; that I was not *Pauline*, and that I knew how to spell my father's name.

I frequently saw people in the keeper's apartments; but spoke to no one except in his presence; yet I was informed of the news of the day. I learned that a wide opening was left in the proceedings for appeal. I began to breathe again; I had some faint

hopes. It was said that Jausion, after sentence had been passed, challenged the woman Bancal and the prisoners, to say if he were present at the murder. (The moment was critical; if guilty, he exposed himself to great danger). It was said that he addressed himself in particular to Missonier, who not being under sentence of death, could take advantage of any bribe he might offer; and that on re-entering the prison, he said, "Madame Manson ought to be arrested; she would then speak the truth."

What will this wretch extort from me? *Does he believe I was at Bancal's; and not having been there himself, does he call upon me to give evidence?* Perhaps not having seen me there, he wishes me to persist in saying I was not present: if the latter supposition be correct, he will be satisfied.

The more I think of this dreadful

affair, the more I lose myself in conjecture. I am, perhaps, the person who sees it less clearly than any; yet I am supposed to possess the key of the whole. On a careful examination of all I have seen and heard, I have deduced inferences which I communicate to no one—*I meditate upon these things in silence.*

When shall we meet again, my dearest mother? I depend no longer upon any one. I would not for the universe be in the secret of the murder. It would finally be wrung from me, and I should not, perhaps, be left long to repent it.

At length an appeal is determined upon. People instantly inquire, "What is Madame Manson saying? What is she doing?"—I do not think the prisoners will succeed better at Albi; but new witnesses have been discovered. At all events I shall not oc-

casion their condemnation, who know nothing. You are acquainted with all the reports circulated to the disadvantage of my father. I have endeavoured in vain to avert the blow. I have sacrificed myself, lost my character, and have infused only greater courage into the heart of his enemies. The reptiles of the Aveyron have discharged their poison. Cursed brood! is the world never to be rid of you?

My father knows very well the charge preferred against him: he never introduced the subject in my presence—but he knew it: I read it in his eyes; in his gestures; in the passionate accents of his despair. He was told I had been at Bancal's, and believed it. His love of justice, of truth, subdued his natural feelings, and he consigned his daughter to disgrace. He believed me to have been a witness of the murder, and was desirous I should acknowledge it. Hence the cause of his persecutions, to which

the malice of the public has assigned other motives.

My father, who sustains with dignity the office of a magistrate; who was at all times an object of terror to the guilty; is accused of countenancing the murderers of M. Fualdès; *of being himself an accomplice!* A man who, from principle, disdained to enrich himself during the Revolution by artifices, which many people of reputed honesty have not scrupled to employ; a man who refused to dissemble his real sentiments at a time when he was in prison, his estates confiscated, and the axe of the executioner hung suspended over him? Is it credible such a man should have become at once a robber and an assassin? No one is consummately bad on a sudden: he does not, in advanced age, discard at once the principles upon which he has uniformly acted. Where is the advantage of leading a life without re-

proach, of acquiring a reputation without stain, if every villain have it in his power to blacken it? Are we, after all, to descend to the grave covered with ignominy? I trust my father will yet rise superior to misfortune. May he confound his calumniators, who, of all monsters, are most to be dreaded! Let every calamity descend on me alone.

I never revenge myself on my enemies: Providence does this for me. I had four; they were formidable: two of them died miserably, and without repentance; a third fell from a precipice; the accident has entailed upon him infirmities which he will carry with him to his grave: the fourth is in prison. Who knows what is yet in reserve for him? It is better to be the oppressed, than the oppressor.

My narrative draws to a close; but still permit me to talk to you, my dear mother; suffer my pen to flow

unconstrained, and freely to express my thoughts. In confinement, this is my only resource; my only consolation.

If any person wish to excite an interest in his favour at Rodez, let him contrive to be capitally condemned. The recipe is infallible; but I shall not make use of it. It is impossible to give you an idea of the popular resentment against Jausion: "he is the most execrable of villains; he alone was the planner of the scheme; it was he who gave the first stab; he ought to be torn to pieces."

The moment sentence of death is pronounced, every thing is retracted. "Poor Jausion!" cries one; "the sentence is much too severe: there were no proofs."—"What will become of his wife?" said another, "and his unhappy children—a father of a family!—how much to be pitied!" At last an

appeal is determined on; and new cries are again heard of "*Death! put him to death!*"

This is the world, my dear mother. It is with the people of our department as with the climate: it freezes here nine months out of twelve; but as there are some fine days, so there are some feeling and excellent dispositions. I have been able to distinguish, and put the full value upon them. Their name, and the recollection of their kindness, are for ever engraven on my memory. Any one who heard me speak of the climate, would imagine I was born in the lovely regions watered by the Tiber or the Arno. It will, perhaps, be said, have you the presumption to speak against your own country, where you have experienced so much impartiality? Posterity will do me greater justice; I appeal to that tribunal; it

will reverse the sentence of my contemporaries.

By what infernal spirits have I been surrounded? They pretend I have been sold to assassins. I hope this calumny will find credit with those only who are themselves capable of such conduct. I value their opinion but little. There are, I repeat it, in the world souls worthy of veneration. May I deserve their praise; may I testify to them my gratitude! The wish nearest my heart will then be fulfilled.

I return from my digression. I have heard in prison, that the little girl Madelaine pretends I am the lady shut up in the closet; and that she had recognised me. As I know that reports are fabricated in Rodez, and the more injurious they are to the character of an individual, the more credit they receive, I give myself very little concern about them. However, the Prefect assures

me he had it from Madelaine herself, who had mentioned it at the Hospital as a certain fact, soon after I quitted him, and said I had promised her a crown if she would declare she did not know me.

So decided a propensity to falsehood, in a child of ten years of age, astonished me. In any other place than Rodez, I should find no difficulty in justifying myself. Is it probable, if I really were concealed in that notorious chamber, that I should go in person to find out the only witness who deposes to the fact, and try in every possible way to induce a girl to speak, whom no one has been able to surprise into a confession, either by promises or threats; and who, for five months, persisted in an obstinate refusal? Some one has told her the story of a woman shut up in a closet, and she repeats it. On the day of the first examination, she maintained

that *one* lady only was in her father's house, on the 19th March; the number in her last deposition is augmented to *seven*. She states that Madame Manson was in the closet, which she was obliged to enter; and on asking why she was put there? they answered, "You shall know soon!" According to another story of the same girl, three other ladies were present, one of whom wore black, the other green feathers, and the third a bonnet.

The story of the lady in the green feathers is supposed to relate to Miss Gibson, the only person in this place, I believe, who wears feathers of that colour. This lady, who is an English woman, went to the Hospital to question little Madelaine; when the girl, tutored by a gentleman who accompanied Miss G., returned such answers as served only to perplex her still more. Of this one of the judges informed me,

who appeared, notwithstanding, to be convinced that her deposition, as far as it concerned myself, was true. I have been confronted with this child. The first time she said she recognised me merely by my voice. When we were again opposed to each other, she declared she knew me by my face. If we meet once more, perhaps she will discover me by my deportment. She made another allusion to the green feathers: this fact is recorded in her deposition. I wore, she pretends to say, on that occasion, a black veil that fell below my knees, *and a red coloured gown.* She says, I *quitted the closet while the unfortunate Fualdès was yet palpitating, and begged for mercy; that I put one hand upon the corpse, and pronounced a terrible oath; that Jausion then seized me, and led me as far as the well.* On another occasion, *that I entered the closet, dressed as a*

woman, and came out of it in men's clothes.

Why assume so ridiculous a disguise? If I had done it, it must have been with a view to avoid detection in the streets. However absurd the story, it has been, notwithstanding, implicitly adopted. Folly, my dear mama, is become contagious. Bancál's wife, I have been informed, declares in prison, that I was in the house on the 19th: I will venture to assert she has made no such declaration; and that the person who reports it, is no where in existence. Not more than a fortnight is elapsed, since we saw each other. She blamed my having said I was in her house, when I never in my life entered the threshold, and I felt myself obliged to confirm her statement. Besides, if there were a lady in the closet, this woman who concealed her there, must have known her; if she did not, how can she say I was the

person? It is impossible to confound me with any other person—mine is no ordinary face. I see it in my looking-glass, but no where else; and if it be true, as I am assured it is, that my portrait is sold in Paris as a correct likeness, the purchaser is defrauded of his money.

Monteil, a Gendarme, pretended to have heard, in the sitting of the 8th September, words which fell from this woman, when speaking of me: "*Let her declare it,—she was certainly there.*"* Upon this the President summoned her, when she denied the having used such an expression; observing, that her words simply amounted to this: "Let her declare it, *if* she was there."† Who does not perceive a wide and palpable distinction?

M. Grandet, the counsel retained by

* Qu'elle le dise, elle y étoit bien.

† Qu'elle le dise, si elle y étoit.

Missonier, heard the expression itself; and repeated it to me in the precise terms used by the woman Bancal. But if it were not so, why should she have contradicted the declaration almost the instant she made it? I spoke to her on this subject when we were lately confronted, and she admitted that M. Grandet had faithfully reported her words. I am in the habit, my dear mother, of hearing things so novel and extraordinary, that I am at a loss how to reply. I gaze in silent wonder, and perform the part of Sosia.

Sometimes I imagine myself to be the lady concealed in Bancal's closet. She is not, however, the lady of the Capuchins; the one is at liberty to expatiate, at pleasure, in the fields; the other is secured by odious iron bars, and a triple door. I torture my invention, and make a thousand conjectures that serve only to embarrass and destroy

each other. There is one, however, which I adopt as plausible: it can hardly be doubted that a woman was present at the murder. M. Fualdès and his friends fix their suspicions upon me; but the opposite party know the contrary to be the truth, yet court inquiry under the idea it may shelter them from suspicion. I will bestow no more pains upon the subject: I am weary of it; get impenetrably dull; and lose my senses. Scarcely a vestige of memory or intellect remains. All that is left is a will, which, if it were uncontrolled, would conduct me to the arms of a tender mother, and beloved child.

I constantly receive visits. Inspectors General, Prefects, officers of all ranks, and inquisitive people, who come for the express purpose of seeing Madame Manson, and who no doubt return home very little gratified.

The Prefect of our department greatly intimidates me. I imagined for a long time, that the embarrassment I felt in his presence, arose from a consciousness of my having given him offence. When he speaks, I am so stupid I can scarcely give an answer. He came, on one occasion, accompanied by M. de Cazes, Prefect of Albi, and brother of his excellency the Minister of Police. I was that day more than usually sullen. As long as these gentlemen remained, I found it impossible to articulate a single word. The subjects introduced by M. Cazes were not calculated to restore me to the use of my tongue. "There are," said he, "three alternatives: you will be prosecuted as an accomplice; confined as a lunatic; or indicted for perjury." This will account for the mute silence I preserved. I stood petrified. But I have not yet related every thing. M. D'Estourmel commissioned the keeper to communi-

cate something to me, but what, neither he nor I comprehended. I thought M. de Cazes wished for an interview with me. I therefore wrote to the Prefect, to say I was always ready to hear M. de Cazes, and should feel myself highly honoured by his visit. The note was found no doubt very much in the style of a school girl, but as I have no longer the appearance of one, the same favourable allowances were not made. The Prefect, I am informed, was very much shocked when he read it, and observed it was a mere sleight of hand.* I put my invention to the rack, to discover the meaning of these words, but to no purpose. It is at all events certain, that my intention neither has been, is, nor ever shall be, to fail in respect to any one. I may, notwithstanding, be compelled to pay dearly for an involuntary act of indiscretion. All I can now ex-

* C'est un tour fait à la main.

pect is to die from terror, when I meet M. Cazes in Albi.

After two months passed in the keeper's lodgings, where I ruined myself, because my expenditure exceeded my income,—I asked for a chamber, and obtained it. By a singular coincidence of circumstances, I inhabit the cell of the celebrated father Chabot, where so many terrible plots have been laid. Mesdames Jausion and Galtier occupied the same chamber during their confinement; but they were infinitely less to be pitied than I. They mutually sympathised with each other; had the caresses of a child to console them; and were not under the restraint of iron gratings. For those in front of my window I must acknowledge myself indebted to the gallantry of the keeper, and the regard he entertains of my safety. He says I am so artful, he cannot depend upon me in the smallest

degree; that if I took a fancy to see Edward, a height of thirty feet would not deter me; and that I should go through the window at the peril even of my neck.

He is always apprehensive of committing himself, and dreads particularly my carrying on a correspondence without his knowledge. I am half tempted to write to M * * *, merely to prove that "*les verroux et les grilles* * . . ." It is useless to finish the sentence, you know the rhyme.

Nothing is more vexatious than remarks of this sort continually addressed to me, "What are you doing here? Cast off your chains: it depends entirely upon yourself."—Can it be supposed by any reasonable man that a woman, and one of my temper, should continue in

* Les verroux et les grilles ne gardent pas les filles,—(bolts and bars are not sufficient to guard young girls.)

the cell of a Capuchin, from mere motives of pleasure? Her taste must, indeed, be very peculiar! "Go!" they cry; "a prison is not a place for you!" —"It is seldom in this world," I rejoin, "that any one fills the place which suits him. I have this advantage, that no one will dispute with me the possession of mine."—"A flattering distinction truly!" cries another, "to be brought as a prisoner to the bar, and seated between Bastide and Jausion!" —"What! was not the Saviour of the World placed between two thieves? and their crimes no doubt were proved more satisfactorily, than by the evidence of nervous attacks. The Jews were ignorant what the vapours were; I am inclined, therefore, to believe that Mesmer would not have realised a fortune amongst them. By-the-bye, do you know that they intended to magnetise me, in order to make me reveal my

secret? But since this operation is a secret, and nothing can be done secretly at Rodez, the experiment has been deferred. No, my dear mother, nothing can be done at Rodez with secrecy, but the murder of Fualdès. I shudder at the idea, dreading the sacrifice of some innocent person. How mysterious the affair, and how terrible!

If I am to be tried as an accomplice, I shall retain no counsel. I should be sorry to owe my acquittal to his ingenuity. I will plead my own cause; and after having acquired the reputation of an extraordinary witness, the public will perhaps consider me still more extraordinary as a criminal. You are acquainted with the merits of the system adopted by a modern writer,* a countryman of your's, profoundly skilled in metaphysics, and still more

* M. de Bonald, the author of a treatise on Divorce.

remarkable as a logician. This philosopher denies that women have souls; but as there is scarcely an animal whose *instinct* does not lead it to defend itself when attacked, I shall endeavour to make use of the feeble means nature has given me for that purpose. I will reply to his remarks one of these days, and if I am accused of having *divorced* myself from common sense, I shall console myself with the idea that I do not stand alone.

I have just formed an agreeable acquaintance with a young man from Paris, who has been kind enough to visit me in prison. He has obligingly taken charge of my memoirs, and has pushed his complaisance so far as to travel eight leagues, in order to convey them to you. Without his polite interference I should not have had the means of transmitting this voluminous epistle.

I am almost under close confine-

MAHARAJA SERFOJI

ment. Not a line can be sent without its being subject to the inspection of the public ministry,* who often derive information at my expense: I write whatever occurs to me; and whilst they are debating on the liberty of the press, give every possible latitude to my pen.

M. Clémendot is shut up in a fortress. A report is circulated that he has written to me,—another piece of intelligence manufactured at Rodez. The letter I received, which is said to have come from him, as if nobody but M. Clémendot knew how to write, was indited by M. Lamire, whose name I have mentioned to you; and who is, without doubt, a little more refined in manners than the Aide-de-Camp of General Wautré.

I shall die of *ennui*; for my memoirs draw rapidly to a conclusion, and I have no other employment. Embroi-

* The King's Advocate.

dery fatigues me, and does not divert my thoughts. I have almost entirely lost my voice. No one will now compare me to St. Huberti. I possess no longer either the talent or inclination to sing. What a state of uncertainty! I have been in prison three months, and do not yet know whether I shall be brought to judgment. What will be done to me? I am not the assassin of M. Fualdès; I was not acquainted with the history of a plot againt his life: had I known it, he should have been instantly put upon his guard. I have been obliged, notwithstanding, to sustain twelve interrogatories, of which, three have lasted eight hours. I do not consider the conferences with the Prefect, nor yet the interviews with my father: how could they escape my recollection? —I cannot enumerate them.

The council assembled on Thursday last, to decide upon my fate. What

the conclusions of the King's Attorney are, and the judgment of the Court, I have not yet been informed. Thank Heaven! they do not finally determine the affair. The proceedings, as far as they have reference to me, must pass through the hands of the Procurator-General of the Court of Montpellier; from this quarter to that of Toulouse; and at length to the keeper of the Seals. I have just addressed a petition to his excellency. Imagine how it will be received. I, a poor rustic, who have passed my life among geese and turkies, venture to write to a great lord!

I repent of it now. My letter will not even be read.* The following are

* Madame Manson judges erroneously of the disposition of the minister. She supposes embarrassments caused by legislative discussions. This appears to have shaken her confidence. The person to whom she entrusted her letter, had the honour of presenting it, at a private audience,

the terms nearly in which it is conceived:

"My Lord;

"Will your excellency deign to a wretched prisoner permission to address you, and may she indulge the hope of a favourable reception? Will the chief minister of justice be offended, if I solicit justice at his hands? I am without protection, my lord, without defence, without support! and repose all my confidence in the sense you entertain of humanity, and the anxiety you feel for the public good.

"I am unacquainted with the language made use of to the great. I am accustomed to speak that only of the heart: the minister of a Bourbon will be able fully to appretiate it. I need

to his Excellency the Keeper of the Seals, who read it with great attention and feeling.

not employ any other language to your excellency.

"There is no precedent in the annals of justice, of a witness so cruelly persecuted as I have been. The affair of Fualdès is a complicated labyrinth, of which every one asks me to supply the clue, when all know at least as much, and many, perhaps, infinitely more than myself. I am assailed at once by two opposite parties. M. Fualdès demands retribution, and accuses me of wishing to screen the guilty. While the other party, fully convinced that I shall say nothing, because I know nothing, urge me still more vigorously to make disclosures.

"I am a victim, sacrificed I know not to whom. I am ignorant who are my enemies. I am not the woman, my lord, concealed in the closet at Bancal's, though, by a chain of circumstances hardly credible, I have been brought to say I was the person present. Such is

the nature of my fears; such the impression produced upon my mind; that I was willing to be viewed in the character of an infamous prostitute, rather than see them converted into realities.

"Do not, I entreat your excellency, reproach me with my conduct at the sitting of the 22nd August. If the proceedings had not been annulled, I would have offered my head; it ought to have been struck off. My crime was involuntary. It signifies not: the consequences must have been too fatal; and I am a striking example of the dangers of conviction.

"If your excellency knew every thing which preceded the fatal sitting of the 22nd: if you knew the state of the unhappy woman who has presumed to address these lines; and to implore your commiseration! I am now charged as an accomplice in a crime, of all others, the most atrocious. The testimony of my

conscience inspires me with courage: death, my lord, does not intimidate me. I viewed it in 1793 without dismay, at a time when I was very young. My parents were sent to prison; I shared their misfortunes; and had they perished on the scaffold, I should have ascended it along with them. In my situation death would be a welcome guest. The calamities of life would then be no longer felt. But to be deprived of liberty; to live for ever separated from all that is dear to me; to be torn from the embraces of my child . . . . Oh! my lord, if you believe me guilty, do not inflict these punishments; you could not invent torture more excruciating.

"I will go, if it be necessary, to a distant land, there to bury my grief in solitude; but not to repent of crimes. I leave riches to those who value them. For myself there is but one blessing in

reserve: I hold it from nature: it ought to depend upon her alone to deprive me of it. Make allowances, my lord, for the anguish of a mother. I am in prison, and alone; massive gratings and triple doors separate me from the rest of mankind: yet I hear incessantly, "Your fate is in your own hands; break your fetters." What would they have me say: that which I do not know; that of which I congratulate myself in being ignorant?

"Oh, my lord, take pity on me! I have been threatened to be sent to Paris. Would to God your excellency had taken the trouble of making yourself acquainted with the merits of my case, and of hearing my defence! I would have stated the whole truth. Could I expect to be sent to the inquisition under the reign of the best of kings, and in vain implore the justice of the upright minister of his will? I

have taken the liberty of addressing you unknown to any one. This will account for the indifferent manner in which I have expressed myself. I venture to hope you will pardon the frank and open manner I have employed, and that you will pay regard to my just complaints.

"Accept, my lord, the assurance of my profound respect, and high consideration. E. MANSON."

Oh, my dear mother, if I could see his majesty Louis XVIII, and the illustrious daughter of Maria Antoinette and Louis XVI, whose fate we have so often deplored in tears! The 21st January is always a day of melancholy; it is the anniversary of the most fatal events: I can never forget it.

I have just been inscribing some verses on the wall of my cell. I ought certainly to leave some tokens of remem-

brance to my successor. I recommend him to arm himself with patience: it is a virtue which cannot be dispensed with here. I mention before hand that the bars are new; the door triple; that they are not easily forced: that neither files nor chisels are to be found; for the gaoler is a man of prudence.

The trial, they say, will commence the 5th February, two months hence; the examinations will last another month. Two months have elapsed since I saw my son, making in the whole nearly six. An age! eternity itself! Every evening I remark to myself, one day more is gone and lost to happiness, since I have not embraced my child. Though life be so short, and all its moments so precious, we are yet often condemned to pass a part of it separated from the objects we love. With what impatience have I desired to be a mother. I recollect having said, on one occasion, I would rather have a

dozen children than be without any. And yet to the partial gratification of my wishes I owe all my sufferings. Happy are they who are insensible to fine feelings: with but few enjoyments, they are not sensible of pain; and how greatly does pain exceed the sum of pleasure!

I frequently see little children passing in front of my window, but not my Edward. A dreadful presentiment sometimes tells me I shall not see him again. My dreams represent him to me as dead or dying; yet a gracious Being knows I cannot survive the misfortune: this idea reanimates me.

His cradle is always near my bed, but he is not there. Amiable little creature, if we ever meet again, who shall have power to separate us?

You will not censure me as indulging too much in sleep. I always go to bed after midnight, and do not close my eyes before four in the morn-

ing, and rise again at a very early hour. I am subject every night to an attack of fever. They prescribe Peruvian bark, but I refuse medicine, and defy Hippocrates himself to cure me. The effect cannot be removed as long as the cause exists. Restoration to liberty and to my child is the only remedy that can be applied.

I have obtained one advantage in prison—this is but equitable; for I have lost so many others. I am no longer tormented by a superstitious dread of ghosts; and shall cease therefore to be the object of your ridicule.

The winter fair must have been very well attended. I have seen great numbers of people passing along the high road. No one has called upon me to-day. I wished to have purchased a drum for my boy, but have not found an opportunity of doing it. I will contrive however to send him one.

How many obligations am I under to you, my dear mamma! I owe to you my own life and that of my son. Without your attentive care, my Edward would no longer have existed: he would have died before he saw the light; and as he suffers from a wound * occasioned by an accident that might have fractured his arm, judge of my feelings, if I had not known he was placed under your superintendance!

If nature has produced monsters, she has also called into life benevolent hearts, that make us forget them.

Farewell, my dear mother,' make the little angel pray for me. I always recollect, with lively emotion, a prayer I once heard him prefer in the church of our Lady, when he did not suppose I overheard him. This was the form he used: "Almighty God, be pleased to

* This accident happened during her imprisonment.

make me a good boy; give health to mamma Enjalran; and take away sorrow from mamma Clarissa."

How can one help adoring so interesting a child, even without being its mother? But my poor Edward is doomed to be unhappy. The fatality which pursues me, pursues all I love; all who are interested in my welfare. I am more to be dreaded than Pandora: I am the source of all evil, and leave behind no Hope.

Farewell, my son, my only blessing; my only consolation. Farewell, my dear mother; I leave you. May this Memoir serve to divert your thoughts. May you find some alleviation of your suffering. Edward will peruse it one day, but he can never form an idea of the anguish he has caused his unfortunate mother. Men are not capable of feeling as women do.

Grief oppresses me. The future

presents no hope of happiness; particularly when I reflect upon the past. I have desired a confessor. I feel my courage abandon me. There are moments when I lose sight of religion. I forget every thing except my mother and my child.

APPENDIX.

INTERROGATORIES, &c.

Sitting of the 22nd of August.

MADAME MANSON being called, the President said:—The public is convinced, that you were carried to the house of Bancal by accident, and against your will. You are regarded as the angel destined by Providence to clear up this horrible mystery. Although there should have been on your part some weakness, the declaration which you will make, and the immense service you will render to justice, will dispel the remembrance of it.

The President to the woman Bancal.—Do you know that lady?

Madame M. turned rapidly towards the prisoner, and raising her veil, asked with a firm tone: Do you know me?—No.

The President to Madame M.—Do you know the prisoner?—No. I never saw this woman

The President to Bastide and Jausion.—Do you know this lady?

Jausion. No; I only saw her at my house once or twice about five months ago, paying a visit to my sister-in-law, Madame Pons.

Madame M.—How then had he the audacity to salute me in full court?

Bastide.—I only know the lady by having met her once on the highway. The President exhorted Madame M. to declare the truth, and tell what she knew of the assassination of M. Fualdès.

Madame M. threw an expressive glance on the prisoners, and fainted away. She was carried out of Court to a terrace before the palace; the most anxious attentions were lavished upon her. There she recovered her senses, but fell into the most violent convulsions. She then screamed with a terrified air—" Rid my sight of these assassins!" She repeated this exclamation several times. The sitting was suspended.

It was announced that she was ready to re-enter, and she was conducted to the witnesses' box.

The President, addressing her with great mildness—Now, Madam, endeavour to compose your imagination. Be not afraid. You are in the sanctuary of justice, and in the presence of the Magistrates, who will protect you.

Declare what you know. Take courage. What have you to tell us? Were you not a witness of the assassination of M. Fualdès.—I was never in the house of the woman Bancal. (After a moment of silence). I believe Jausion and Bastide were there.

If you were not present, why think you so?—By the anonymous cards that I received; by the steps they took with me.

Do you know the hand-writing of these letters?—I know neither the writing of Jausion nor Bastide. I believe one of these letters is a letter of their counsel.

Of whom?—Of M. Arsaud. They came to me to make me retract the first declaration I made at the Prefecture. Madame Pons, in particular, the sister of Bastide, came at nine o'clock in the evening, and remained with me till one o'clock in the morning, endeavouring to persuade me.

What did you promise to Madame Pons?—I promised to retract my first declarations, because they were false. I had said that I was in the house of Bancal, where I never was.

You have told us your first declaration was false; you know nothing therefore about Jausion and Bastide. How could you then say you believed them guilty?—By conjecture. Then

turning to Jausion she said, "When a man murders his children, he may murder his friend, he may murder any body:" and addressing herself to him, in a firm tone, "It is you I am looking at."

The President.—How murder his children?—The affair is arranged, but the public will not be duped.

Have you no other reason for your belief than this arranged affair?—I never was at the house of Bancal. I will answer for that on the scaffold.

This is not what you said to irreproachable witnessess, who can be called. We shall call your cousin Rodat.—I will support every thing he says. I have made imprudent declarations; I retract them. I promised so to Pons; they were forced from me by a dread of my father. Did you but know how I have been menaced.

The President, in the most pathetic tone:—In the name of your unhappy father, torn by a thousand anxieties; in the name of justice, in the name of humanity, whose ties have been broken by a crime which alarms all society, I conjure you to declare what you know. Why would you betray the truth? Yes, if you had a weakness to reproach yourself with, your declaration will re-establish your character in

public opinion. See with what attention we listen to you. Speak then, speak. The public, astounded at a crime committed on the person of a man whom you have known, of a Magistrate who sat by the side of your father, demands nothing but the triumph of truth. It will cherish you—it will exalt you to the clouds if you reveal the true criminals. Prove that you have been brought up in the love of justice, show that you love it, and that you can obey its dictates. Remember that you have often spoken in your letters of the honour of your family; that this honour can never ally itself with perjury, and that the wound which you may now inflict upon it can never be healed. Speak out, daughter of Enjalran; speak, daughter of a Magistrate.

During this speech the countenance of Madame M. changed by degrees, and at the last words she again fainted. When she began to recover from her swoon, she saw by her side General Desperières: pushing him away with one hand, and extending the other to his sword, she exclaimed, "You have a knife," and again fainted. She recovered her senses, however, without leaving her seat.

The President again, after having endeavoured to sooth her feelings, and to calm her imagination, requested her to speak.

"Ask," said she, "of Jausion, if he saved the life of a woman at the house of Bancal?"—"No, Sir, I never saved the life of any one." The eyes of the prisoner met those of the witness; she turned round towards the President, exclaiming—"Great God! There was a woman in the house of Bancal; Bastide wished to kill her, but Jausion saved her!"

"But," said the President, "they both deny that they were there."

Madame M.—"Bastide and Jausion not there! Ask Bousquier if he knows me?"—Bousquier denied having ever seen her before. The witness being asked if she knew Bousquier, said, she did not. She spoke incoherently, and again fainted. She had heard, she said, that a woman was in the house at the time of the murder, and was concealed by Bancal.

The President.—Where did they conceal this woman—in a closet? Tears fell from the eyes of the witness, and she said, "Yes, in a closet," but denied that she was that woman; declaring, at the same time, that Bastide wished to murder her, but was prevented by Jausion. She said she had received addresses of certain houses, which she was requested by the Prefect to visit for the purpose of making discoveries, but she was afraid, and refused. She was afraid of finding persons belonging to

the family of Bastide in her visit. Then casting an incensed glance at the prisoner, she said, "They made a terrible oath over the dead body:" ask Jausion if he did not believe the woman whose life he saved was Madame M. The General, who attended the witness when she was carried out in a swoon, was examined, and deposed, that when she returned to herself, she exclaimed, "Save me from these assassins; they will destroy all the honest people in the department; let me be examined, and I will speak the truth."

M. Fualdès, the son of the deceased, interposed and said, the witness is frightened at the sight of poniards, and still more at the presence of the assassins of my father; let eight soldiers be placed between her and the prisoners, to shade them from her view, and to secure her against apprehended danger. He conjured the witness then to speak the truth in the name of his father. The line of armed force was placed as requested. The President then asked her if she was in the house during the assassination. Bastide interrupted the President, and denied being in the house of Bancal, whatever might be said by Madame M. The witness then stamped with her foot, and cried out, "Confess, wretch!" All hearts thrilled. After

some moments of gloomy silence, the President said, "How can you accuse these men so strongly, and not declare you were in the house?"—"They cannot deny it, there are so many witnesses against them."—"Why do you fear the voice of Bastide? Why do you tremble when you hear of the dead body of Fualdès and the fatal knife?"—She then said she would adhere to her declarations before the Prefect.

[M. Amans Rodat and Victoire Radoulez were then heard; the substance of their evidence will be seen at the end of these extracts.]

Sitting of the 23rd of August.

The President called the Chevalier de Marcillac, Captain of the Gendarmery, and asked him if he had not some statements to make, relative to the deposition which Madame Manson made yesterday? M. de Marcillac replied, that when Madame Manson came down from the witnesses' box he looked at her attentively; that he observed her to be in a state of great agitation; that she uttered these incoherent expressions: "No person takes pity on me; they believe I was at Bancal's house." She seemed to be thrown into convulsions at the very sight of Bastide. "At any rate, I will not spare Jausion." She continued to speak, and when M.

Fualdès, son of the deceased, rose to put a question, she said, "He is going to propose that I should be sent to prison: what would he have me say?" When Victoire, examined as a witness, had finished, "It is not she, it is I who tell a falsehood." M. Marcillac declared besides, that he heard her speak of her child, and utter the word "*assassins.*" She said, among other things, "I should prefer death to my cruel situation."

Clémendot's Deposition.

M. Clémendot, Aide-de-Camp of General Wautre, was called. He deposed, that on the 28th of last July, in the evening, walking with Madame Manson, he mentioned to her that a report was current in town, that in the night of the assassination of M. Fualdès, a female was in Bancal's house, where it is suspected the crime was perpetrated; that she remained there against her will during the whole time of that horrible butchery; that she went there in consequence of an assignation; that several names were mentioned, and her's among the rest. "Madame Manson," the witness added, "did not repel, in my opinion, this assertion with sufficient warmth. I believed it to be well-founded; and, after pressing her closely, she acknowledged that she was the person who was

there. It would be difficult to describe the emotion which this avowal produced. I urged her afresh, and entreated her not to conceal any thing from me, assuring her that I took the warmest interest in her behalf, by considering the danger that she must have incurred. She then told me, that having gone into that house, and speaking with Bancal's wife, she heard a noise without, occasioned by several persons who seemed to be struggling to get in; that then Bancal's wife pushed her into a closet, in which she shut her up; that the celerity with which this movement was executed, threw her into a great fright; that this terror increased, when not a particle of doubt rested upon her mind, but a horrid crime had just been committed; and still more so when, in spite of her agitation, she could hear that her own life was threatened; that at length she was taken out and suffered to depart, on a solemn promise of the most profound secrecy as to every thing she might have seen or heard; that she should expiate with her life the slightest indiscretion. She added, that she had been a long time in recovering from her fright; that during eighteen days she had got a little girl to sleep with her, at the house of M. Pal, where she lodged; and that every night as she entered, she examined every corner and recess of the apartment.

I observed to her, since she found herself in Bancal's house, she ought to know who were his assassins. Did you recognise, I added, Bastide Gramont? She replied, that never having seen him, she could not recognise him—and Jausion? 'Ah!' said she, 'I never saw him more than 'two or three times, and I could with difficulty 'distinguish him from his brother.' I mentioned to her that being of the same town, it was surprising she was not better acquainted with the inhabitants. She replied, that she had been a long time absent. A number of trifling incidents have escaped my recollection. What I can state with truth is, that the weakness of Madame Manson's reasonings, and the embarrassment which my urgent questions occasioned, respecting two individuals, convinced me that she knew all the actors in this horrible tragedy. My conviction was so strong, that I said, Madam, what you have now related marks as a principal delinquent a man, whom they believed guilty only of the theft committed at the house of M. Fualdès the day after the assassination. 'To whom do you allude,' she asked? To Jausion I replied. She instantly covered her face, and said '*Don't let us say any* '*thing more about that*;' which I considered as a tacit avowal. I constantly renewed the conversation respecting this affair; and having ob-

served to her, according to the report current in the town, that Bastide and Jausion were certainly not the only perpetrators of that assassination, she replied, that in fact there were still two others who acted a part, and who were not apprehended, adding, that she did not know them. I inquired why she had not made a disclosure to a magistrate. 'These 'people,' she observed, 'have such family 'connexions, that sooner or later I should pay 'dear for my imprudence; besides, the visits 'which I have received from Madame Pons and 'Madame Bastide have prevented me.'

The following day, when I was at breakfast with several persons, allusion was made to that rendezvous, and the name of a lady resident in the town was mentioned. Then, urged by a sense of justice, I said loudly it is false, for I know the person. The same day I was summoned before the magistrate, to whom I related the circumstances in the way I have just now done. Notwithstanding, Madame Manson immediately after denied having said any thing to me on that subject. Some days after, the Prefect, having brought her before him, succeeded in obtaining from her own mouth the same facts she had stated to me. The Prefect did me the honour to send for me, and confront me with her. She acknowledged

immediately she had related to me all I had deposed, adding only that I had extorted from her by interrogatories two-thirds of the evidence, and that she had given her assent only by yes or no. The Prefect and myself remarked to her that it amounted to the same thing." M. Clémendot proceeded afterwards to combat certain unfavourable rumours that a similar confidence had produced, and of which the tendency would be to injure the reputation of Madame Manson.

Madame M. was again intreated to confess the truth, but she denied having said any thing to M. Clémendot. The Marquis D'Estourmel, Prefect of the Aveyron was then introduced; he delivered the following

Declaration made by Madame Manson, at the Prefecture, on the 2nd of August, 1817.

"On the approach of night, 19th March, 1817, I passed through the street of the Hebdomadiers, being near the house of M. Vaisettes. I heard several persons coming; to avoid them I entered a house, the door of which I found open. I have since understood it belonged to Bancal. As I walked along the passage, I was seized by a man, approaching, whether from without, or from the interior of the house, the agitation I

was in, and the darkness, did not permit me to distinguish. I was hurried into a closet. '*Hold your peace*,' said an unknown voice. The door was shut, and I swooned. I know not how long I remained in the closet. I heard, now and then, whispering and walking about in the next room, but without being able to distinguish what was said. A silence of a quarter of an hour succeeded the noise. I then tried to open a door, or a window, the fastening of which was under my hand, and I struck my head violently against something. A man instantly came into the closet, seized me by the arms, forced me to cross a room where I thought I saw a faint light; and we went out into the street. The same man dragged me rapidly to the Place de Cité, in the direction of the well: he stopped, and said to me in a low voice, 'Do you know me?'—'No,' answered I, without daring even to cast my eyes upon him. I confess that I did not endeavour to know him.—'Do you know whence you come?'—'No.'—'Have you heard any thing?'—'No.'—'If you say a word, *you shall die*;' and, violently compressing my arms, 'Begone,' said he, and he pushed me from him. I went a few steps without daring to turn round. After having recovered a little from the excessive consternation which I felt, I knocked at the door of a house in which

Victoire lived, who was my mother's lady's maid. They did not hear me. I went down the street Ambergue, and concealed myself under the staircase of the house of the Annunciade, which I knew to be abandoned. I perceived that a man followed me. I knew him to be the identical person who had previously conducted me. He came up, and said, 'Is it really true that you do not know me?'—'Yes.'—'I know you well.'—'That is possible; many people may know me from sight, though I may not know them. We have both made a miraculous escape: I went to that house to see a lady. I am not one of the assassins. At the instant I laid hold of you, seeing that you were a woman, I took compassion, and snatched you from the reach of danger. But what brought you to that house?'—'I had seen some one go in, whom I thought I knew; and I wanted to satisfy myself.'—'Is it really true that you do not know me? If the slightest circumstance escape you concerning that affair, swear that you will never speak of me. At the Place de Cité it was not so dark as here; should you know me on seeing me in the day?' I answered that I should not. In half an hour he quitted me, and said 'Do not return home till day-light, and do not follow

me.' I assured him that I had no intention to do so. At day-break I got to my lodging; went to bed; no one knew that I had passed the night out of doors. A few hours after, intelligence of the murder was reported in the town, and I experienced such terror, that I procured a little girl to sleep in my chamber.

"E. Manson."

After this declaration other papers were read which had been communicated by the Prefect. One of these documents detailed menaces which had been uttered by the chiefs of the conspiracy. Poniards and poison were mentioned; and on hearing that part read, Madame Manson fainted, and was carried out of the court.

When she returned, the President asked who the woman was whom she saw in the house of Bancal? Being pressed by questions, she uttered this remarkable declaration:—"You force me to a terrible confession!"

Again the President exhorted Madame Manson to speak the truth. New reservations and denials by the lady, and farther exhortations on the part of the President followed' she exclaimed—"What would you have me say when my confessions accuse me? I told the

¶

truth when I said that I was not at Bancal's. I never saw the crime committed."

The President.—But did not you see the woman who was there?

Madame Manson.—No.

The President.—How could you say, then, that Jausion and Bastide were guilty?

Madame Manson.—I do not know whether Jausion was an accomplice in the murder.

After several other questions, Madame Manson said, "What do you want me to tell? I am going to furnish you with more arms against me. I will prove that I was there, and yet I was not there. A witness deposed that Bancal's daughter had received a piece of stuff to make a bonnet, and that stuff resembles one of my gowns."

The President—No witness has stated that.

Madame Manson.—It will be deposed.

The President afterwards spoke to Madame Manson of the visit which she lately paid in the house of Bancal, in the presence of the Prefect and M. Julien the Judge. He asked, whether, on entering the closet beside the kitchen, she did not say that that was the place in which she was shut up.

Madame Manson replied, that *a terrible confession was torn from her.* She added, that

she had not spoken, as was pretended, of having been obliged to take an oath; but that, if any one had saved her life, she never could be the cause of making that person mount the scaffold. She also stated, that *all she had before related or declared out of that court was false.*

M. Fualdès, junior, here asked Madame Manson, whether it was not true that she had slept from home on the night of the 19th of March? Madame Manson answered, "No," and repeated *that all she had said elsewhere was false, that in court only she spoke the truth.*

A witness stated that he had heard Madame Manson declare that the prisoners were guilty, and would all suffer.

Madame Manson replied, that the witness had not heard right. "It is inconceivable," she added, "every body should wish to make me a witness in this business; it is a thing incredible."

Other witnesses related speeches or declarations of Madame Manson, which she answered, as usual, with denials.

General Desperrières deposed, "That at the end of the sitting of the 22nd, Madame Manson appeared much agitated; that having caught the eye of Bastide, she appeared struck with horror, and exclaimed, "*What looks that wretch darts at me.*"—"I endeavoured," said the General,

"to calm her, and observed to her, that if she knew any thing she ought to speak. She replied, '*No, never, never!*'" In his deposition the General farther stated:—"Yesterday evening, as I was placing a guard on this lady's apartment, to secure her against any sort of danger, but at the same time without depriving her of her liberty, she spoke to me thus:—'Why 'did I not know you sooner, General? When 'I began to speak you should have given me a 'guard.'"

Madame Manson did not deny this conversation, but repeated before the Court that a guard ought to have been set over her from the moment she was called as a witness.

In the sitting of the 3rd of September,

M. Merlin, the counsel for M. Fualdès, jun. (the civil party) delivered a speech of seven hours. The following is the manner in which he noticed Madame Manson's mysterious expressions:—

"Some days after the discovery of the assassination, Madame Manson, conversing with M. Rodat, said to him, '*If you had been at the 'house of Bancal, if you had witnessed every thing, 'if you knew the truth relative to the assassins of 'M. Fualdès, what would you do?*' and when this worthy man answered her, that he would

have blessed God in having led him to the scene of such violence, to save the life of a father of a family, she added, '*but if you were* '*without arms, or the means of defending him?*' On another occasion, the conversation having turned to the discovery made by Bousquier, Madame Manson said again to her relative, '*I believe it true, it is true.*' Another time, when justice was already apprized of the discoveries made by this lady, she again said to her cousin, who engaged her to reveal the truth, 'If you condemn me, I am lost; advise 'me, I will tell whatever you desire; I will say 'that it was Jausion who conducted me near the 'well, but I have not been at the house of 'Bancal.' Since the commencement of the trial, her cousin telling her that no person doubted her having been at the house of Bancal, and that she knew the assassins, she replied to him, '*But when one is bound by an oath . . . . if one* '*of the criminals had saved your life . . . . could* '*you turn the hatchet against the neck of him who* '*had saved your life?*'"

Every one is aware of the answer of this witness to her cousin, and also of her conduct and answer to the President, when he questioned her on the declaration of M. Rodat. She assented to every thing, without having named Jausion; and concluded by

declaring, that since the witness affirmed it, she ought to have done so. It is very difficult to see any thing more frank, more sentimental, more instructive, or more conclusive than this declaration. We have remarked in Madame Manson an imagination still impressed with the scene of horror which passed before her, a heart violently agitated by retaining within herself this horrible mystery, contending between the necessity of keeping it concealed, and the desire of communicating it at least to the bosom of friendship; frequently overcome by the terror, the apprehension of losing her life, sometimes by the superstition of the most terrific of all oaths; and finally, restrained by a sentiment of generosity for him who had saved her life. Therefore, from all these tergiversations, all these variations, all these extraordinary scenes, the conclusion has been that the great secret kept by Madame Manson is no longer a mystery.

From the admissions of this lady, confirmed in the deposition of M. Clémendot, in that of Victoire Redoulez, that she knew her to be incapable of telling an untruth; in that of the Prefect, and in the letters she wrote to that worthy functionary, we cannot be surprised at what occurred during the trial. We can hardly doubt the guilt of Bastide and Jausion. Every thing is explained in this cause; she has the

secret of the assassination, and the knowledge of the assassins; and if in the course of the proceedings we have been surprised at her inconceivable tergiversations, we can clearly attribute them to the remembrance of him whom she believes to have saved her life, to the fear inspired in her by a dreadful oath they had caused her to take over the dead body of their victim, and to the pressing solicitations of Madame Pons, sister of Bastide, and sister-in-law of Jausion. But in spite of all these motives to silence, it was impossible for her to retain her secret, when Jausion declaring that he did not know her, having only once seen her at the house of Madame Pons, she said, with an angry air, 'Why then hadst thou the audacity 'to salute me in open Court?' And when, again she exclaimed, '*Remove these assassins from my sight!*' when at their presence she experienced violent convulsions, and completely fainted. When fear or false shame prevented her from acknowledging her having been at the house of Bancal, she however expressed *her belief that Bastide and Jausion were there*; when speaking of Jausion, she said, that *he who had murdered his own child was capable of committing the greatest crimes*; when on the affecting exhortation addressed to her by the President, her features altered, new convulsions agitated her,

and her hand touching the sword of the Marshal de Camp Desperrières, she in a frenzy exclaimed, '*You have the knife!*' and fainted; when again she said to the Marshal de Camp, '*Save me from his assassins!—you will not be 'always near me—if they escape, they will murder 'all the worthy people of the department*;' when again having recovered her senses, she uttered these remarkable words:—'*Ask Jausion if he 'had not saved the life of a woman—if there was 'not a woman in Bancal's house—she was not 'saved by Bastide, Bastide wished to kill her— 'Jausion saved her.*' Then turning to Bastide, she exclaimed, '*Confess then, thou wretch!*' and speaking of Victoire Redoulez, 'She is incapable of 'telling an untruth—*it is not she but I, who falsify '—I can say no more, I have taken an oath.*'"

In the speech of M. Romiguière, defender of Bastide Gramont, he apostrophised Madame Manson, and said, "Your contradictions, your concealments, your half avowals, your terrors, have furnished the public ministry with reasons whence it has drawn consequences more injurious to the prisoners than if you had pronounced the most positive testimony that could declare them guilty. It would be much better for them that the truth, however terrible, should proceed entire from your mouth. What could prevent you from speaking out? In the name

of the prisoners I demand it. What have you to fear from their vengeance? they are in irons." At these words Madame Manson suddenly interrupted the advocate, and exclaimed, "*Ah! all the guilty are not in irons!*" These words, which seemed extracted from her by the force of truth, excited in the assembly a silent agitation which affected every mind.

The trial ended on the 12th of September, when sentence of death was passed on Bastide, Jausion, Colard, Bax, and the woman Bancal (her husband died in prison); Ann Benoit, and Missonier were condemned to hard labour for life; Bousquier to one year's imprisonment and a fine of fifty franks; Bancal's daughter and Mesdames Jausion and Galtier were acquitted. Madame Manson had been apprehended and conducted to prison previously, on the 14th of September

A legal objection having been taken as to form, the judgment has been annulled, and they are to be tried again at the Court of Assizes at Albi, on the 11th of March next, when Madame Manson will appear, along with the other accused, as an accomplice.

FINIS.

Printed by T. C. HANSARD, Peterborough-court, Fleet-street, London.